

TOWSON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN'S PREMARITAL  
SEXUALITY AMONG FEMALE TURKISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

By

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A thesis

Presented to the faculty

Of Towson University

In partial fulfillment

Of the requirements for the degree

Master of Science in Women's Studies

April 2006

Towson University  
Towson, Maryland 21252

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Mehmet Atif Ergun, entitled Social Determinants of Attitudes towards Women's Premarital Sexuality among Female Turkish University Students, has been approved by this committee as satisfactory completion of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts or Science in the department of **Women's Studies**.

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To mom, dad, and Emek

## ABSTRACT

### SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN'S PREMARITAL SEXUALITY AMONG FEMALE TURKISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Mehmet Atıf Ergün

The current research explores the effects of background and attitudinal and behavioral variables on attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality in a sample of 277 undergraduate female students at Istanbul University, Turkey. Among background variables, mother's education, age, ethnicity, and employment status were found to be better predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. For participants who never had sex, mother's education and ethnicity were better predictors. Of all variables, sexual attitudes best predicted the dependent variable. Once sexual attitudes was excluded from the equation, personal and political religiosity and political participation were better predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. When background and attitudinal and behavioral variables were combined, personal religiosity and mother's educational background were the best predictors.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	ix
Introduction.....	1
Literature Review.....	4
Social Control and Sexual Development.....	5
Frameworks on Attitudes toward Premarital Sexuality.....	15
Relationship Reasoning.....	15
The Socialization Model.....	17
Premarital Sexual Standards.....	18
The Theory on Courtship, Family, and Premarital Sexuality.....	19
Social Determinants of Premarital Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors.....	21
Time Period.....	21
Modernization.....	24
Region.....	27
Religion.....	29
Age.....	37
Personal Attitudes, Beliefs, and Intentions.....	38
Dating behavior.....	39
Prior sexual experience.....	40
Parents.....	41
Peers.....	43

Educational Environment.....	44
Social Class.....	44
Summary.....	45
Premarital Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors in the Turkish Context.....	46
Islam and Women's Sexuality.....	47
Virginity and Women's Premarital Sexuality in Turkey.....	49
A Statistical Picture of Women's Premarital Sexuality in Turkey.....	53
Summary.....	60
Research Questions.....	60
Methodology.....	62
Data Collection.....	62
Demographics.....	63
Construction of the Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables.....	64
Political Participation, Denomination, and Attitudes.....	68
Religiosity.....	69
Sexism.....	70
Sexual Practices.....	71
Sexual Attitudes and Attitudes towards Premarital Sexuality .....	72
Results.....	73
Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Background Variables.....	73
Regression Analyses.....	77

Relationships between Background Variables and Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality .....	77
Relationships between Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables and Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality.....	80
Relationships between Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables, Background Variables, and Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality.....	84
Conclusions and Discussion.....	90
Background Variables.....	90
Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables.....	93
Background and Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables.....	97
Limitations of the Research.....	98
Practical and Policy Implications.....	99
Appendix A – Turkish Survey.....	103
Appendix B – English Survey.....	115
Appendix C – İ.Ü. Department Letter.....	127
Bibliography.....	128
Curriculum Vitae.....	149



## List of Tables

Table 1. Factor Analyses of Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables.....	66
Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Demographics.....	73
Table 3. Frequencies on Selected Demographic Variables.....	75
Table 4. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Background Variables.....	78
Table 5. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Background Variables for Respondents with No Prior Sexual Experience.....	79
Table 6. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal Variables.....	81
Table 7. Regression of Attitudes Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables Excluding Sexual Attitudes.....	82
Table 8. Regression of Attitudes Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables Excluding Sexual Attitudes for Participants who had Prior Sexual Experience.....	83
Table 9. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables and Background Variables.....	85
Table 10. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables and Background Variables Excluding Sexual Attitudes.....	87
Table 11. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables and Background Variables for Respondents <i>with</i> Prior Sexual Experience Excluding Sexual Attitudes.....	89



## Introduction

Premarital sexual attitudes and behaviors were a popular area of research, particularly from the 1960's in the United States until the early 1980's, and continuing into the present. Consequently, American researchers identified several variables that were related to premarital attitudes. The research during that era was extensive.

In comparison to American researchers who have done extensive research on human sexuality and on premarital sexual attitudes, Turkish scientific inquiry is marked by silence. There are few research studies conducted on sexual practices and attitudes in Turkey. To address this absence, this study proposes to explore the determinants of premarital sexual attitudes. One such determinant, religiosity is particularly important given the social control function of religion in Turkish society. Premarital sex is a valuable means through which women develop their sexuality in practical terms. That is, premarital sex provides important practical tools of sexual education for women during their sexual development. In contemporary Turkey, however, women who engage in premarital sexuality experience informal sanctions (Sakalli-Ugurlu and Glick, 2003), to say the least. As such, Turkish culture, similar to many other cultures, inhibits sexual experimentation and practice prior to marriage (which is constructed as *the benchmark* of permitted sexual activity).

The development of sexuality progresses from birth to death. Premarital sexuality is a key element of this development. Ideally, in later adolescence, the individual comes up with a stable sense of her/his self, or feels in conflict about gender roles, thus developing her/his gender identity, which is an important aspect of the individual (DeLamater, 2002). In

addition, a sexual identity (e.g. homosexuality, heterosexuality, bisexuality etc.) emerges in terms of attraction to others. Moreover, managing the physical and emotional intimacy in relationships is learned during adolescence (DeLamater, 2002).

However, in a society where premarital sexuality is prohibited by religious, social, and even personal norms and rules, sex-play/practice is absent. Consequently, the sexual development is rendered 'theoretical' instead of practice-based. The prohibition of premarital sexuality blocks many of the physical aspects of this developmental process, leaving especially women sexually underdeveloped until marriage. The sexual and gender identities developed during adolescence are theoretical in real life in the absence of relevant practice. As premarital prohibitions restrict sex-play/practice during adolescence, marriage becomes the major arena where one can practically experience sexuality.

Marriage, particularly in Turkey on the other hand, is inherently a controlled patriarchal environment. It confines a woman to a state-enforced monogamous relationship with a man, in which only one sexual object and a limited number of sexual experiences are possible. Moreover, marriage still seems partly to be a means for women to attain respectability and status within society under the control of men, instead of mental and physical gratification with a partner. Although women might attempt to take control of their reproductive health, the patriarchal control over their sexuality goes unchallenged during marriage on an institutional level. Consequently, as Thapan (2003) suggests, the body regresses into a means of survival, instead of becoming a means of pleasure.

The current research is a descriptive analysis of a Turkish population's premarital

sexual attitudes and behaviors. It explores the effects of background and attitudinal variables on attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. The background variables investigated in this research include age, sexual orientation, city of birth, ethnicity, total monthly income, number of children, residential partner, employment status, social class, mother's educational background, and father's educational background. The attitudinal and behavioral variables include political participation, political denomination, interest in politics, attitudes toward social regulation, personal and political religiosity, modern and old-fashion sexism, attitudes toward unpaid labor, attitudes toward women's organizations, sex life quality, and sexual attitudes.

## **Literature Review**

This literature review is in five sections: social control and sexual development, frameworks on attitudes toward premarital sexuality, social and personal determinants of premarital sexual attitudes and behaviors, and premarital sexual attitudes and behaviors in the Turkish context. The studies used in the in this literature review are based on American populations, unless otherwise noted.

Because socialization has long been a tool to control women's sexuality and shapes sexual attitudes and behavior, the first section discusses the effects of culture and its various elements on children's, adolescents', and adults' attitudes towards sexuality and their sexual activities. Hence the goal is to provide an overview of how patriarchal culture inhibits sexual experimentation and practice prior to marriage (which is constructed as *the* benchmark of allowed sexual activity), which might otherwise have provided important tools of sexual education for women during their sexual development.

The second section will discuss frameworks on premarital sexual attitudes such as the relationship reasoning model, the socialization model, the four major standards of premarital sexuality, and the theory on courtship, family institutions and premarital sexuality.

The third section examines previous research in terms of social determinants of premarital sexual attitudes and behaviors while the fourth section investigates personal determinants.

The Fifth and final section will focus on the Turkish context and will shift emphasis

to Islam and the concept of virginity, as these elements seem to play a rather important role in women's premarital sexual lives in Turkey. Sex research conducted in Turkey will also be examined.

### Social Control And Sexual Development

Socialization has long been a major factor in the societal control of various aspects of sexuality. Individuals learn norms, information, and behaviors relevant to sexual activity during their development (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Reiss, 1967), from childhood to late adolescence (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979). Through socialization, individuals inherit a set of norms that act as the basis of self-control over sexual activity, including premarital sexuality. This section will discuss how culture and its various elements affect children's, adolescents', and adults' developing sexual attitudes and behaviors.

Women don't automatically become sexual at puberty or after marriage (Freud, [1962] 2000). Learning about sexuality is a lifelong process (Kirkpatrick, 1984) that starts from birth. There is little research about the sexual development and expression of children or the problems they experience during their attempts to understand their sexual feelings and experiences (Daniluck, 1998). Children are sexual beings and will exhibit a broad range of sexual behavior (Freud, [1962] 2000; Friedrich, 2003) and their sexual behavior becomes increasingly diverse over time (Friedrich, 2003).

It seems one can assume that children's first source of sexual information is their own and others' bodies. As Daniluck (1998) argues, preschool children like to be nude and

are very interested in their own nudity as well as other children's and adults'. They are also likely to touch and rub their own genitals as the pleasurable sensations will commonly be discovered when different body parts are touched and rubbed (Daniluck, 1998; Kirkpatrick, 1984). Sex play in non-sexual contexts such as playing doctor-patient contributes to children's learning of sexuality (Gagnon and Simon, 1973), during which, others' body gestures carry the messages about what degree of sexual intimacy is appropriate and acceptable (Kirkpatrick, 1984). Children's own physical affection and the reactions of others to such affection influence their future comfort with their own body, desirability, and sexuality, which in turn affects how the child demonstrate his/her feelings (Kirkpatrick, 1984). It is also common for young school age children to explore their own genitals and have acute interest in the bodies and the actions of their peers (Daniluck, 1998).

Related to the child's attempts to discover sexuality, the family, which is believed to be the strongest of the environmental factors that influence a child's early development, is crucial to sexual development. The family functions as an advocate and enforcer of sexual norms. Forms of sexuality that are not controlled by the family may be chastised, socially punished or even punished under the law (Duggan and Hunter, 1995). Society, thus, is anxious to ban or demonize the anomaly of unsanctioned sexuality through the family (Duggan and Hunter, 1995). In Kirkpatrick's (1984) terms, when children's explorations result in negative and angry disapproval from the environment, this influences the sexual learning of the child: The child learns what should and should not be touched. These responses become the basis for the child's feelings of pleasure and guilt about her future



sexual body and activity in the adolescent years and on.

Adult activity in regard to the child's acts depends on adults' conceptualization of these acts. The responses to these actions such as words and displays vary. The adults either label them as sexual and demonize them, or they deliberately describe them as non-sexual, or simply ignore them (Gagnon and Simon, 1973). Although the child's sexual words and displays are not pathological, they are commonly treated as such (Ehrhardt, 1994). As Ehrhardt observes, for example, parents give out confusing responses to their child's sexual behavior such as “you should do it in the dark” (p. 128) or “it is private and you shouldn't talk about it” (p. 128). Commonly referred to as the “abuse perspective” (p. 128), lots of healthy behaviors of the child get flagged as either typical behaviors of an abused child (Ehrhardt, 1994) or as abnormalities of the child herself. For instance, early masturbation is commonly considered an abnormal behavior for both boys and girls. However, there is no support for the idea that early masturbation results in over-sexualization of the child (Bancroft et al., 2003). To the contrary, there is a link between early-onset masturbation and more positive sexual experiences in adolescence and early adulthood (Bancroft et al., 2003).

Very few American parents provide their children with sufficient, correct, and meaningful information about sex (Daniluck, 1998). The situation is not different in Turkey (Inandi et al., 2003; Koral, 1991). The parents function as the society's norm enforcer (Duggan and Hunter, 1995). They are limited by the social world they occupy. As such, their influence on their children is restricted by repressive rules and norms of that social world, where the social communication related to children's and especially girls' sexuality is

often confusing (Daniluck, 1998). As Daniluck argues, young girls risk becoming dissociated from their body parts commonly associated with sexuality. Parents' use of language, which lacks a powerful and affirmative emphasis, further complicates this picture as common sexuality-related words convey mystery and disconnection, such as “down there”. This process disconnects girls from the pleasure and enjoyment embedded in their body and sexuality. For instance, for a girl who is growing in a repressed family where sex is taboo and who has little opportunity to express, ask, and learn, it is possible either to repress her sexuality, or to become more and more interested in sexuality, as if it were a forbidden fruit (Daniluck, 1998). In both cases, the tabooing of her body and sexuality, as Daniluck argues, may result in a sexual self that is built upon guilt and shame.

Sexuality begins before adolescence and adolescents may already have experienced some of its advanced stages such as masturbation and orgasm (Gagnon and Simon, 1973) in their youth. According to a study conducted by Reynolds et. al. (2003) in Indiana University in 1998-1999 with a large group of undergraduate students between 18 and 22 years of age, 84.4% of the females had sexual experiences with peers prior to high school. These experiences involved advanced sexual behaviors even before elementary school, although they were rare. These experiences became more advanced and frequent with time.

Regardless of prior experience, the onset of puberty and menstruation is an important stage in a girl's sexual development (Daniluck, 1998). Menstruation can be an opportunity for the family and the school to teach girls about their bodily functions, although this is usually done while disconnecting such information from sexual education

deemed socially inappropriate (Daniluck, 1998). The common tasks for an adolescent girl include integrating physical changes to bodily feelings and to her old self-image, starting to develop her identity and body image, and beginning to identify her sexual orientation by examining her sexual experiments and by evaluating to whom she usually is sexually attracted (Daniluck, 1998). Her family and the more direct effect of the social environment that surrounds the family and the girl mark this stage in her life. For example, according to Bates et. al. (2003), sexual activity in adolescents is related to a cluster of rebellious, externalizing, problematic behaviors, including negative interactions with the direct social environment that the adolescent is in, such as conflicts with teachers, parents, and peers. Their study seems to suggest that a girl's better adaptation to a culture where sexuality is conceptualized as pathological, predictably results in less sexual activity.

Some parents' disposition not to talk about their children's sexuality-related bodily functions may lead to a situation where the parents do not teach the teenager about her body parts, especially the genitals (Daniluck, 1998). "... women's uncertainty about their genitals and the workings of their own bodies seems to create an inhibiting insecurity" (Daniluck, 1998, p. 32). Peer messages during menstruation are also significant as most girls turn to their same sex friends for guidance as information coming from their parents is scarce.

Girls initially share their sexual activity with peers (Ussher, 1997). However, as Ussher observes, even memories and dreams of sharing such experiences invokes feelings of moral inadequacy, guilt, disgust, and anxiety. The reoccurring pattern of guilt and shame

suggests that, as Tulman (1994) observes, the communication of sexual desires in girls lessens as a means to avoid others' disapproval and thus a lapse in their connection with the outside world. This cycle reduces their probability of obtaining sexually relevant information.

Although silence may be a common defense against social stigmatization in adolescent girls, well-informed peers can greatly help girls normalize the learning process. However, the negative effect of the lack of information from dependable sources and the implicit message in the media and in religion that girls and women should be protected from being dirty, smelly, and unpleasant during menstruation inescapably complicates this important stage in a girls sexual development (Daniluck, 1998).

Media has an important role in girls' sexual development as well. Adolescents use mass media as a source for learning about sex and about body image norms (Gagnon and Simon, 1973), and they tend to choose highly sexual content over neutral ones (Durham, 2004). As such, in general, they tend to be vulnerable to patriarchal media images: media representations of femininity seem to be confining, unreasonable, and focused on a logically unattainable physical beauty (Durham 2004). Although there is little research on the effect of this source on girls' sexual development, Durham (2004) sheds some light on how sexual development is affected by the media. According to Durham's study, on their own, girls may be somewhat critical towards the media content. However, the dynamics of their peer groups may force them to inhibit the critical nature of their take on the content. Peer groups use media content extensively as a training "opportunity" to learn ideal femininity. Because

peer acceptance is very important in girls' culture and because media is used by their peer groups to shape their commonly held beliefs about sexuality, deviance from the media images may result in judgments of abnormality (Gagnon and Simon, 1973). In other words, girls who do not conform to the ideal feminine images depicted by the media will risk being castaways.

As a woman matures and becomes adult, the society's control over her body and sexuality through the family, school, and peers seems to *shift* to a more direct control through the patriarchal capitalist state and its applicable policies, laws, and institutions such as science, medicine, and international power agencies. These male dominated sources of power reinforce the historical and cultural imposition that "... the role of women in sex, as in every other aspect of life, has been to serve others – men and children." (Hite, 2004, p. 335). For example, as Foucault (1990) argues, unorthodox sexualities that allowed for women's sexual pleasure are transformed into scientific language for a better control over them. "... all the possible deviations were carefully described ..." (Foucault, p. 36) for the more efficient management of these deviations to be possible (Foucault, 1990; Ussher, 1997). Such management of deviance allowed the "normal" society to proliferate patriarchal heterosexual procreative monogamy (Ussher, 1997).

Another illustration of the above mentioned shift comes from De Grazia (1992), who extensively studies the effects of a fascist state on women's sexuality in Italy. The oppressive nature of a fascist state is strongly related to the contemporary politics of Turkey, which experienced fascist coups in its history and which is currently led by an

Islamist fundamentalist party, disguised under a liberal Islamic discourse unlike its predecessors (see Mecham, 2004; Tank, 2005; Atacan, 2005).

De Grazia (1992) argues that women in Italy were chosen as the antagonist of the state and were the target of court rulings and obscenity laws. Their sexual behavior was seen as more harmful than that of men's, and thus they were punished more severely in sexual offense cases. In the meantime, the inaccessibility of sexual information, i.e. the "sex black-out" (p. 56), was used by the state as a means to restrict birth control. Women did not know about menstruation until it first occurred and they knew very little about sexuality until their first night of the marriage. Premarital intimacy was almost impossible because there was little probability of successfully escaping from the fascist surveillance system that included friends and neighbors. Sexuality was not thought in classes. Educational material available through translations were aggressive against extra/premarital intercourse, sexual trial and error, divorce, and birth control. Marriage was used as the means to control the perceived dangerous and risky nature of women's sexual freedom. Through the repressive processes of the fascist state, women's sexuality fell prey to the Victorian positivist scientific view that sexual deviation in women led to illnesses and physical abnormalities. For example, "... masturbation produced tuberculosis, impotence, and sometimes fatal cases of peritonitis. Lipstick led to lip cancer, and casual physical contacts, such as occurred in kissing, bred disease." (p. 137).

The above mentioned shift of control does not only occur on the local/national level. Imperialist entities play an important role in this new hegemony as well. Turkey has long

been the target of Western nations for modernization. Both in Turkey and in these nations, the common conceptualization of the modernization process predicts that the target nation and its citizens (men and women) will inescapably benefit from this process. This is not always the case. Greenstreet and Banibensu (1997) inform us that, with the introduction of modernization, traditional sexual practices that had a relatively positive effect on women's sexuality in Ghana became obsolete and the strong bond between the three generations of women (grandmothers, mothers, and daughters) weakened. The sexual knowledge transfer shifted from a level of explicit sexual instructions to a level of moralizing and socializing. Although the modernist elements introduced to the culture rendered young girls more independent from their grandmothers and mothers, its patriarchal nature also prevented them from reaching adequate levels of sexual education as their access to sexual information was severed. According to Harcourt (1997), as a result of the effect of imperialism in Ghanaian villages, girls were not well informed on their bodies and sexuality. Young women were silenced about sexual practices and had almost no control over their sexuality. Unmarried women were kept away from sexual knowledge as their ignorance symbolized their chastity, which increased their chance for marriage. Through the interaction of the society's traditional and modern elements and the disruption of the generational transportation of traditional knowledge, sexual pleasure and control was denied from women.

In brief, as mentioned above, sexual learning is a lifelong ongoing process (Kirkpatrick, 1984), during which women are greatly restricted in their attempts to sexually

develop. During this process, children's initial source of sexual information is their own and others' bodies. Self-exploration and sex play contributes to children's learning of sexuality (Gagnon and Simon, 1973). Their physical affection and the reactions of others to such affection influence the child's future comfort with her body, desirability, and sexuality, which in turn affect the way they demonstrate their feelings (Kirkpatrick, 1984). As children attempt to discover sexuality, the family, which functions as an advocate and enforcer of sexual norms, is a crucial layer in the sexual development of children. Because the parents function as the society's norm enforcer (Duggan and Hunter, 1995) and because they are the social products of their social worlds, their influence on their children is limited by the their society's repressive rules and norms (Daniluck, 1998).

Despite the fact that sexuality begins before adolescence and adolescents may already have experienced some of its advanced stages such as masturbation and orgasm (Gagnon and Simon, 1973), the onset of puberty and menstruation is an important stage in a girl's sexual development (Daniluck, 1998). Media images are effective especially in this stage. As a woman matures and becomes adult, the society's control over her body and sexuality shifts to a more direct control through the patriarchal capitalist state and its applicable laws and institutions such as science, medicine, and international policies. During adulthood, local laws, the tendencies in capitalist states to practice fascist-like activities, and the modernization policies that are imposed on societies as a condition for much needed financial aid play a crucial role in women's sexual lives.

In every stage of one's sexual development, the effect of the patriarchal society is



evident. It is thus not surprising to see how women's sexual development is constructed around male interests. Premarital sexuality, another venue to practice sex, is no exception.

### Frameworks On Attitudes Toward Premarital Sexuality

#### *Relationship Reasoning*

D'Augelli and D'Augelli (1977) investigated the relationship between sex guilt, sexual philosophies, moral development, and premarital sexual permissiveness; and proposed a stage model of “relationship reasoning” by relating premarital sexual behavior to Kohlberg's (1969, 1976, in D'Augelli and D'Augelli, 1997) developmental stages of moral reasoning: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. The reasoning develops from being more concrete and focused on meeting one's own needs towards being more abstract, focused on values of trust and mutuality in social contracts (Kohlberg's Stages of Development, Wikipedia).

According to their research, couples' sex experience with each other was a predictor for both partners' sex guilt, which increased with moral development stage of the respondents. They reported that higher reasoning development was also correlated with permissive attitudes towards sexuality: students who favored abstinence had the lowest moral reasoning development, compared to students who favored a double standard and permissiveness with affection.

Moreover, they found that sex guilt, sexual philosophy, and moral development were related in some ways: sexual philosophies that favored virginity were positively correlated with higher moral development. Sex guilt was also related to sexual philosophy

such that liberal sexual philosophies tended to positively correlate with less sex guilt.

On the basis of the above findings, D'Augelli and D'Augelli (1977) argued that one's decisions about engaging in a sexual behavior might start at an interpersonal level as the sexual act occurs with someone else: two individuals are bound to make a mutual decision as to which sexual behavior are acceptable and doable. The authors claimed that the focus on the interpersonal environment of the individual should be investigated more closely.

D'Augelli and D'Augelli (1977) defined “relationship reasoning” as “a cognitive dispositional variable similar to moral reasoning. ... relationship reasoning is involved at decision-making points in which the individual or dyad is confronted with choices as to the nature and quality of the relationship. These points concern change within relationship, whether towards initiation, enhancement, or dissolution.... Most critically, relationship reasoning is applied to situations in which relationships of possible durability are involved.” (pp. 61 – 62).

Three levels of reasoning were proposed: “egoistic reasoning” (decisions are based essentially on cost-reward analysis, costs and rewards emerge from the partner, the optimal relationship offers instant gratification), “dyadic reasoning” (decisions are based on expectations of the partner, the other's view is the central point in one's decision making, optimal relationship fulfills the partner's expectations), and “interactive reasoning” (relationship decisions are based on the couple's consensus, optimal relationship allows creation of “dyadic-specific norms”). These reasoning stages, contrary to the accepted stage model (Kohlberg's Stages of Development, Wikipedia), were used relative to the context of

the relationship: according to the model, individuals were allowed to regress to a previous stage if the relationship context required them to do so.

In brief, according to the authors, sexual decision-making, a crucial element of premarital sex, “is structured by the relationship reasoning of the partners and is given content by sexual philosophy and moral reasoning” (p. 64). However, although sexual satisfaction with the partner was among variables of the current research, it should be noted that the effects of relationship development and moral development on attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality was not a focus in the current research.

#### *The Socialization Model*

DeLamater and MacCorquodale (1979) focused on the causal relationship between sexual behaviors and prevalent norms and rules in relation to the individual's sexual developmental process. They argued that one's own attitudes and beliefs are the results of one's socialization. They proposed three factors as determinants of premarital sexual attitudes: “ideology”, which includes parental characteristics (e.g. parental sexual permissiveness, parental sex education), sources of moral information (e.g. mothers, female friends for women), and respondent's characteristics (e.g. social desirability, self-esteem, body image, gender roles); “social influences”, which includes involvement in religious institutions, religious attendance, religiosity, and marital expectations; and “sexual behavior.”

According to DeLamater and MacCorquodale, most of the variables interact with each other. For instance, permissiveness of the parents' sexual ideology positively correlated

with the individual's sexual ideology. Involvement in religious institutions, religious attendance, and religiosity negatively correlated with the degree of intimate sexual behavior. Age and marital expectations were related to sexual behavior such that older individuals and those planning to marry had more probability of engaging in sexual behavior. Perceived social desirability and one's perceived physical attractiveness were positively correlated with sexual activity. Present sexual activity was associated with the number of sexual activities friends were involved in. Larger incident of sexual activity of best friends was associated with more intimate current sexual activities. Participants involved in emotionally more intimate relationships tended to report more intimate sexual activities. Also, the longer the relationship was, the more intimate the couple got in terms of sexual activity.

#### *Premarital Sexual Standards*

According to Reiss (1960), at the time, there were four major premarital sexual standards: “abstinence”, “permissiveness with affection”, “permissiveness without affection”, and “double standard”. Those favoring the abstinence standard believed that sex was too important, too valuable, and too intimate to be performed outside the marriage. Reiss identified four subtypes for this standard: “petting without affection”, “petting with affection”, “kissing without affection”, and “kissing with affection”. The questions for the dependent variable of the current study were constructed on the basis of Reiss' (1960) research on these subtypes (see Appendix A or B). Petting without affection was consistent with the belief that physical intimacy with sexually attractive partners was acceptable as long as intercourse did not occur. Kissing without affection seemed to be followed by

teenagers who were too conservative to go beyond kissing. Reiss argued that this was a conflict between the fear of losing one's partner and the fear of going beyond kissing.

The second standard Reiss identified, permissiveness with affection, was defined by the acceptance of intercourse if the partners were having a steady and affectionate relationship. The third standard, permissiveness without affection, was marked by a special emphasis on physical pleasure. The followers of this standard believed that both parties needed to be sexually attracted to each other for intercourse to be acceptable. The fourth and final standard, double standard, was identified by Reiss as the oldest premarital sexual standard closely related to religions. Its followers did not necessarily perceive this standard to be rightful, but acceptable and permissible. The core of this standard, according to Reiss, was the belief that women were inferior and were objectified through marriage or fatherhood. Double standard allowed sexual freedom to men but not to women. “Non-virgin” (p. 101) women were condemned as stigmatized, bad, evil, and disliked. The “virginal” (p. 101) women were, to the contrary, pure. Findings indicate that the double standard is still a strong sexual standard in Turkey (Kayar, 2005; Erkmen, 1990; Ilkkaracan, 2000).

*The Theory On Courtship, Family, And Premarital Sexuality*

Another contribution of Reiss (1967) was a more specific theory on the determinants of premarital sexual attitudes following a study with 2734 participants from 6 different colleges (N = 1219) and from a national adult sample (N = 1515). Reiss' findings were dominated by strong and significant racial differences. Blacks tended to be more

permissive than whites even when controlling for social class while there was almost no relationship between social class and premarital sexual permissiveness. Racial differences were slightly stronger in the adult sample when compared to the college sample.

Reiss' other findings included the following: the bigger cities (over 100,000 population) tended to positively relate to permissiveness; participants from urban areas tended to be more permissive; the South, the most rural region in the U.S. at that time, appeared to be the lowest in permissiveness; those who dated more regularly tended to be more permissive; the number of steady dates and the number of love relationships were positively correlated with permissive attitudes; those who never changed their standards over time tended less permissive; and most of the participants perceived their peers' standards as similar to theirs.

On the basis of his findings, Reiss proposed the following theory:

“The courtship and family institutions are two key, direct determinants of the norms regarding premarital sexual permissiveness. The sexual norms of the courtship institution will reflect the basic values of the family institution relevant to sexuality. However, when participant-run, the courtship institution tends to normatively differentiate from the family institution and to react more to the permissive pressures of the courtship role and therefore to have relatively high permissive premarital norms. The biological sex drive pressures the individual toward more permissiveness when outside controls are weak. Due to the female's closer ties to the family institution, such differentiation tends to be different and less complete for her than for the male. The family institution, with its emphasis on the role of parental responsibility, tends to react less favorably to permissive courtship pressures, and thus the basic values inculcated by the family do help limit eventual permissiveness. Societal forces affect individual permissiveness in a group, both through pressures from other courtship and family groups with different permissive norms and through pressures of other institutions, tending to encourage or discourage the autonomy of the participant-run courtship system and the independence of

thought of the young people themselves. In addition, the basic norms of these other institutions help define the range of acceptable sexuality and thereby help shape the ways in which sexual permissiveness will express itself when courtship autonomy is high. The basic tendency in a participant-run system is for the participant, due to his role position, to increase his permissiveness during courtship and to somewhat reverse his views after marriage and parenthood.” (pp. 166 – 167)

### Social Determinants Of Premarital Sexual Attitudes And Behaviors

Social norms and rules regarding sexuality seems to have a deep effect on individuals' attitudes towards premarital sexuality. As noted earlier, Reiss (1967) categorized four standards for the acceptability of premarital sex, which seemed to be the popular social norms regarding premarital sex in the U.S. in 1960s. These norms are still observable in the U.S. as well as in Turkey. Especially for women, social criticism, stigmatization, social punishment, lowered reputation, sex guilt due to internalized values of chastity and virginity, and loss of some power seem to be some of the risks of engaging in premarital sex. A key characteristic of these social norms is that they are not stable: they change with time, region, and external or internal attempts of modernization.

#### *Time Period*

Time is an important factor when one investigates social norms. A number of studies show that premarital sexual standards tend to become more liberal and more egalitarian between sexes over time, although there are some fluctuations. Alston and Tucker (1973), using a 1969 representative sample of 1196 white American adults, concluded that most participants (80%) felt premarital sex was wrong. In comparison, Croake and James (1973) compared premarital sexual attitudes between 1968 and 1972, and argued that college

students held more liberal attitudes in 1972 compared to 1968. With a sample of 2453 undergraduates from 4 geographical areas of the U.S., Lewis and Burr (1975) identified a pattern of “permissiveness with commitment”. Bauman and Wilson's (1976) longitudinal study compared two samples from one university campus. The sample in 1972 (107 males and 68 females) tended to be more permissive and showed less gender differences compared to the sample in 1968 (98 males and 88 females). King et. al. (1977) compared data from 1965, 1970, and 1975 from a total of 975 undergraduates. They argued that the premarital sexual revolution, which was said to start in 1960s, had accelerated in 1970s. They explained their results by referring to a more institutionalized youth counter-culture on college campuses as well as to the women's movement.

Singh (1980) compared data from five U.S. national surveys (1972, 1974, 1975, 1977, and 1978) and found a declining influence of factors such as social class, sex, and race, while age and religion appeared to be consistent factors affecting premarital sexual attitudes across time. Keller's 1982 study suggested, similarly to studies cited above, that males and females were moving towards a more equal standard regarding premarital sex. Robinson (1982) replicated a survey by Robinson et. al. (1968, 1972, in Robinson, 1982) with 399 college students. The author identified a pattern of “sexual contradiction” (p. 240) where participants who reported more restrictive sexual standards had higher levels of premarital sexual behaviors compared to other studies in their literature review. The author concluded that reported premarital sexual behavior tended to increase among both males and females. There were also fewer differences in attitudes and behavior between genders.



Some participants from both sexes had a new premarital sexual standard where they imposed stricter rules on the opposite sex and more liberal rules on their own sex. Earle and Perricone (1986) compared surveys from 793 undergraduates taken in 1970, 1975, and 1981. They identified significant increases in rates of premarital sex, significant decreases in average age of first intercourse, and significant increases in average number of partners over time. They also found that although a double standard between genders still existed, the difference was more evident in attitudes rather than in behavior.

In a 36 years longitudinal study on Czechoslovak gynecological patients who had post-treatment conditions following gynecological treatments, Raboch (1989) found that the average age at first intercourse dropped by 2.95 years from participants born between 1911 and 1920 to participants born between 1961 and 1970. They also found that between 1921 and 1970, the number of participants who had premarital sex increased from 1% to 12%. Harding (2003) similarly identified a sharp increase in liberal attitudes toward premarital sex between 1969 and 1973, although those over 30 years of age were generally more conservative than those younger.

Wells and Twenge (2005) conducted a meta-analysis of 530 studies with a total of 269,649 participants to investigate changes in young people's sexual behavior and attitudes. They found that sexual attitudes and behavior change significantly between 1943 and 1999, especially among women. Both genders became sexually more active as the age of first intercourse decreased from 19 to 15 in women. The percentage of sexually active women also increased from 13% to 47%. In addition, premarital sexual attitudes became more

liberal as rates of approval increased from 12% to 73% among women.

Michaels and Giami (1999) compared six surveys between the years of 1948 and 1994. They concluded that even scientists' attitudes were becoming more liberal. In earlier surveys, researchers associated heterosexual intercourse to the institution of marriage. In 1970s, there was a greater tendency to unlink these two, as various types of nonmarital relationships became more visible (such as nonmarital cohabitation and non-cohabitational relationships). Michaels and Giami concluded that the link between sexual acts and sexual relationships were not intrinsically linked to each other anymore.

However, it should be noted that, contrary to above findings, Roche and Ramsey (1993) found that their 1988 female sample had lower levels of sexual intercourse and a conservative change of attitudes due to increased knowledge of AIDS from 1983 to 1988, although attitudinal change was more common than actual behavior change.

### *Modernization*

Related to both time period and region, external and internal attempts of modernization seems to play an important role in the determination of attitudes towards premarital sexuality. Modernization may have an effect people through immigration, or through either a nation's (or more commonly, a group of nations') imposition of modernism on another nation, or a nation's internal attempts to “modernize” itself. For the purposes of this study, I oversimplified modernization by defining it as the imposition of North-Western industrialized nations' common social rules and norms on other nations through cultural imperialism.

Investigating the effects of immigration, Hojat et. al. (1999) compared 160 Iranian immigrants in the U.S. to 97 Iranians in Iran. Their findings revealed that those who were exposed to the American culture, especially women, were more permissive towards premarital sex as compared to Iranians in Iran. Hendrickx et. al. (2002) examined the challenges presented by a modern society and the influences of the cultural and social backgrounds among young Moroccan Islamic immigrants to Belgium. Their participants (N = 55, 27 boys and 28 girls) were second generation immigrants between 15 and 21 years of age, unmarried, and from Berber or Arabic speaking families. They found their participants tended to be minimally influenced by the social environment they found themselves in. Almost all the boys wanted to marry a woman with no prior sexual experience. They tended to look down on Muslim girls who did not hold to this standard. Among girls, who were aware that most Moroccan men wanted a bride who did not have any premarital sexual experience, premarital sexuality was similarly unacceptable. Girls' contact with boys was minimal and was kept in extreme secrecy. Although petting was more or less allowed, intercourse was avoided except for some girls who, according to the authors, allowed it in order not to lose their boyfriends. Among girls, premarital sex was associated with fears of being "discovered" as being a virgin in the first night of marriage, and related negative social consequences of such discovery.

Smith (2001), after finding that prevalence of premarital sexual relations are significantly increasing in Nigeria, speculated that increased age of marriage and higher levels of urban migration played an important role in changing premarital sexual attitudes.

To the author, sexual relationships were defined simultaneously as an appropriate expression of intimacy and as a statement of modern identity.

Bennett (2005), investigating contemporary Indonesia, identified the availability of public and private transport, modern meeting places such as malls and touristic destinations, and the resulting absence of parental supervision and relative privacy as critical modernist influences contributing to higher rates of premarital sexual behaviors. Although the public pressure against premarital sex still existed, the probability of having opportunities of covert sexual behaviors was higher. In this context, Bennett argued that female peer groups and sisters functioned as social support networks and confidants of women who engaged in premarital sex, while male relatives and brothers acted as control agents and the police of women's "honor" and "reputation", similar to the general society and the parents.

Discussing the nature of premarital relationships, Bennett also pointed out that some feminist researchers identified premarital sex as a form of "indirect or unconscious resistance" (p. 80) to the patriarchal system. While the definition of resistance is controversial (i.e. is it possible to "unconsciously" resist?), Bennett argued that "Single women can and do simultaneously support the oppressive systems through their silence, while subverting and transforming the nature of those systems through private forms of resistance" (p. 81). Hence, women in Indonesia found a way, through the common elements of modernization, to bend the rules without publicly breaking them, and consequentially without disobeying their parents, damaging their respectability, and causing public scrutiny, which might otherwise be perceived as common results of one's resistance to culturally

prominent norms and rules. Through this discourse, Bennett seemed to argue that modernization in Indonesia damaged women's opportunities to resist patriarchy while simultaneously increasing their chances of escaping social sanctions for their norm violating behaviors.

### *Region*

Studies seemed to demonstrate significant differences between nations. There seemed to be significant variance within various regions of a nation as well. Raschke (1976) studied premarital sexual permissiveness among 264 college students in midwest United States, 26 students from Hong Kong who were studying in the U.S., and 153 students attending colleges and universities in Hong Kong. The study found that students in Hong Kong were less permissive and less active, that the majority of determinants of premarital permissiveness also held as factors for these students, and that Chinese students studying in the U.S. tended to share similar attitudes and behaviors with American students regarding premarital sexuality.

Sprecher and Hatfield (1996) compared attitudes on premarital sex and sexual permissiveness among 695 male and 972 female participants from colleges in Russia, U.S., and Japan. The study found that American participants were more accepting of premarital sex relative to Japanese and Russian participants. Sexual permissiveness was higher for men than in women in the U.S. and Russia, but not in Japan. Russian subjects were more likely to support the double standard than Japanese and American participants, while American men tended to favor double standard early in the premarital relationship.

Kaufman et. al. (1996) compared China to the U.S. in terms of teenage sexual attitudes. Their findings indicated that Chinese teenagers were low on premarital permissiveness, although they were tolerant of those who engaged in premarital sexual activity. Close parent-child relationships had different effects on premarital sexual permissiveness in China than in the U.S. In China, where family honor was focused on boys, parental factors negatively affected boys' premarital permissiveness. In the U.S., where parents were focused more on their daughters, the negative effect showed itself on girls' premarital permissiveness.

Gaga (1994) compared sexual activity among never-married women between the ages of 15 and 24 from sub-Saharan African nations of Botswana, Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Togo, and Zimbabwe. In most countries, the study found, the majority of unmarried participants were sexually active and that increases in sexual behaviors occurred mostly in countries where the prevalence of sexual activity was already historically relatively higher.

Widmer et. al. (1998) compared 24 countries in their prevalent attitudes towards nonmarital sex. They singled out the Philippines as an extremely conservative nation, where any variation of nonmarital sex, and especially premarital sex was always wrong. The study also singled out Japan due to Japanese participants' tendency to allow for exceptions to the unacceptability of premarital sex. Other than Japan and Philippines, the study identified four major clusters: “teen permissives”, “sexual conservatives”, homosexual permissives”, and “moderate residuals”. The teen permissiveness cluster, which included Germany (East and West), Austria, Sweden, and Slovenia, was marked by higher permissiveness towards

teenage and premarital sex. The sexual conservatives cluster, which was composed of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the United States, showed relatively lower permissiveness towards all forms of nonmarital sex. The homosexual permissives cluster, which included Netherlands, Norway, the Czech Republic, Canada, and Spain, was distinguished by higher levels of homosexual sexual permissiveness, with signs of polarization. They also accepted premarital sex while rejecting teen and extramarital sex. The moderate residuals included Australia, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Bulgaria, Russia, New Zealand, and Israel, and had no real common characteristics other than serving to increase the homogeneity of other clusters.

Ghuman (2005) investigated residential differences in married participants from the Hai Duong Province of Vietnam in 2001. The study indicated that premarital permissiveness is higher for those who lived in urban areas, had more schooling, and were married after the late 1980s. The study also noted that these variables were related to premarital sexual permissiveness more among men than in women. The reported level of premarital sex was lower than estimates from other parts of Asia and the developing world (Ghuman, 2005).

### *Religion*

Although religion has an intrinsically close relationship to the individual, it seems to be an overwhelming social force affecting attitudes towards premarital sexuality both on a macro and on a micro level. As Freud [1928] (1989) argues, the task of religion evolved into extinguishing the defects of the society, which were already defined by the society itself. However, as Freud claims, the weakness of a “cleansed” individual's intellect should

not be surprising, for s/he accepts the absurdities of religious doctrines and uncritically overlooks the contradictions between them. Thus, religion brings upon the “retardation of sexual development” (p. 60) in children. In a parallel line of thought, young “women labour under the harshness of an early prohibition against turning their thoughts to what would most interested them -namely, the problems of sexual life” (p. 61).

Due to the rich literature regarding religion and premarital sexuality, the important role of religion in the Turkish society, and the almost consistent finding that religion significantly affects sexual attitudes, I chose to allocate relatively more space for this determinant. Although the effect of religion on premarital sexual attitudes is strong and seemingly prevalent, it should also be noted that, as Linfield (1960) argues, families and the more general society that inculcate religiosity in children is also simultaneously infusing restrictive sexual codes in them.

In a study on changing attitudes towards premarital sex, Bell (1966) indicated that the nature of religion was changing with time and found a tendency of significant differences between religious affiliations as well as religiosity in past literature. According to the study, Jewish girls started to date at younger ages than Protestants or Catholics. Protestants tended to start dating at older ages and were more reluctant to remain in casual relationships than Catholics. Those with no religious affiliation had higher rates of premarital intercourse. The degree of religious intensity and its influence on values varied greatly within religious groups, although it still was a significant factor in terms of its correlation with premarital sexuality.



In a study of 114 male and 223 female undergraduates, Thomas (1975) found that sexual experience was related to low conservatism, permissive attitudes towards premarital sexuality, low church attendance, and not having a religious affiliation, particularly for females. In a sample of 480 women, Herold and Goodwin (1981) found that religiosity was the third most important factor influencing premarital sexual activities, after peer sexual experience and dating commitment. Investigating data from a 1967 sample of 114 college students, Reed and Weinberg (1984) found that for women who dated serially or were going steady, religiosity did not have an effect on premarital intercourse behavior.

Examining the effects of sectarian and nonsectarian college environments in a sample of 20 students from each of eight colleges, Jurich (1984) found that students in a small religiously affiliated college were the least permissive towards premarital sexuality while those in the largest nonsectarian college were the most permissive. Hong (1985) found that, in a sample of 657 Australian participants aged between 19 and 69 years, church attendance had a significant influence on premarital sexual standards. In a sample of 40 Indian girls between the ages of 19 and 23, Parsuram (1988) found that those who never had sexual intercourse before were significantly more religious than those who had, and reported more favorable attitudes toward premarital sexuality.

Woodroof (1985) examined freshmen attending 8 colleges affiliated with the churches of Christ. The study found a significant relationship between religious orientation and premarital sexual activity. While the religious variables of the study were effective in identifying those who had never have sex before, they did very poorly predicting those with

prior sexual experience. The author also concluded that the conservative Christian participants of this sample were much more religiously active and much less sexually active when compared to other studies that she reviewed: the rate of students with prior sexual experience was 25%, significantly lower than the often reported 40% - 60% rate for freshmen students.

Using a probability sample extracted from whites' birth records in 1961 in Detroit, Remez (1990) tested a theoretical model that investigated the causal relationships between religious attendance, attitudes towards premarital sex, and sexual experience among adolescents. The study was longitudinal in that mothers were interviewed in 1962 and five more times over 18 years, and the children were interviewed in 1980, when they were 18 years old but still not married (N = 916). The study found important generational differences and differences between adolescent men and women. Approximately one third of the mothers approved premarital sex, while most of the male adolescents (77%) and females (65%) were permissive towards premarital sex. About one fourth of the adolescents had two to five partners. Restrictive attitudes toward premarital sexuality and lower sexual experience were prevalent among those who attended religious services more frequently and reported religion as more important in their life. Remez suggested the model accurately predicted that mothers passed on their attitudes to their children and that adolescents' sexual activities were related to these attitudes. Remez' analysis further revealed that religious affiliation influenced attitudes toward premarital sex more than premarital sexual behavior did. While fundamentalist Protestants or Baptists scored lower in permissiveness, no effect

of religious affiliation was found on behavior except for Jewish teenagers, who were less likely to ever have sex. Beck et. al. (1991), however, found that religious affiliation had a significant effect on both premarital sexual attitudes and behaviors. They found that “institutionalized sects”, specifically Pentecostals, Mormons, and Jehovah's Witnesses, exhibited lower experience of premarital sex, even after controlling church attendance.

Cochran (1991) used the reference group theory to investigate the effect of religion on nonmarital sexual attitudes. According to reference group theory, individuals' behaviors and attitudes are strongly affected by the groups they are in because individuals use these groups both to evaluate their past behavior and to determine their current or future behaviors. Cochran found that out of a number of religiosity measures (religious attendance, strength of religious identification, belief in afterlife, and membership), only religious attendance was significantly and negatively affecting premarital sexual behavior for those with no membership and for Jewish, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians. For members of Catholic, Methodist, and Protestants, both attendance and strength of religious identification significantly and negatively affected premarital sexual permissiveness. For Lutherans, attendance, strength of religious identification, and membership significantly and negatively affected premarital sexual attitudes. For Baptists, belief in afterlife, attendance, and strength of religious identification were found to negatively affect premarital permissiveness. Cochran argued that although the teachings of American religions on nonmarital sex often vary, almost all previous studies ignored differences between different religious bodies. According to Cochran, the findings suggest that, consistent with the

reference group theory, the effects of religiosity were different across religious groups and that such a pattern was in accord with the differences in religious teachings across these groups on premarital sexuality.

In a sample of 477 freshmen attending eight colleges affiliated with the churches of Christ, Woodroof (1986) found that the religious behaviors of parents and peers were related to both the religious and sexual behaviors of adolescents, while peer religiosity was a significantly more effective factor than parental religiosity. Referring to the reference group theory, Woodroof noted, based on this finding, that parents no longer constituted a strong reference group for college students even in such a conservative sample.

Cochran et. al. (2004) asserted from previous literature that a general empirical principal seems to form, namely that there is a negative correlation between religiosity and sexual permissiveness. They argued that this generalization could not capture how the changing cultural norms (from more conservative to more liberal and then back to more conservative) affect the role of religion in determining premarital sexual permissiveness. With such cultural shifts, churches seemed to either adjust their own teaching towards more permissiveness or did not act on these shifts. As such, there were differences in how much each church and thus each faith group condemn nonmarital sexuality. Cochran et al. referred to reference group theory to explain the variance in permissiveness between these religions. They argued that more prevalent secular standards within a society tended to emphasize the effect of religion on sexual permissiveness in the results obtained. Less secular social mood, on the other hand, seemed to overshadow the effect of religion.

With data taken from 1972 – 1993 Cumulative Social Surveys with 14,396 cases, Petersen (1997) tested the idea of whether the relationship between religious affiliation and beliefs change as the support for those beliefs declines in the general population. Accordingly, the researcher found that there was no decline in support for traditional non-permissive premarital sexual attitudes over time among conservative Protestants who more frequently attended church. Support for such beliefs declined significantly among mainline Protestants and Catholics regardless of church attendance and among conservative Protestants who attended church infrequently.

In a sample of 527 participants ranging from 16 to 18 years of age, Sheeran et. al. (1993) found that religiosity was significantly related to sexual attitudes and anticipation of sexual intercourse but not to actual sexual activities. Overall, more frequent church attendance was related to less permissive sexual attitudes and less likelihood of reporting sexual intercourse. Religious affiliation was also a significant factor affecting sexuality. Catholic and Protestant participants' sexual attitudes were more conservative and they had more negative judgments of sexually active others, but they also tended to be more sexually active.

Controlling for gender, age, and ethnicity and using a sample of 606 college students, Pluhar et. al. (1998) found significant correlations between religious affiliation, premarital sexual permissiveness, and students' perceptions of how much religion affects their sexual behavior. Strength of beliefs and religious service attendance were significantly related to attitudes toward premarital sexual intercourse. Exploring the relationship between

religiosity and attitudes and first sex in a longitudinal study, Meier (2003) found a significant effect of religiosity on first sex for females. Using longitudinal data from 1982 and 1988, O'Connor (1998) found that religion played a growing role in white teenagers' premarital sexuality. For instance, the rate of fundamentalists who reported no prior sexual experience increased substantially between 1982 and 1988. In a longitudinal sample of 303 teens aged 15 – 16 in 1996 (time 1) and 17 – 18 in 1998 (time 2), Hardy and Rafaelli (2003) found that teens with higher religiosity tended to delay sexual experience. McKelvey et. al. (1999) found that the most strong background variable related to sexual attitudes and sexual knowledge was frequency of religious attendance during the past month, regardless of religious affiliation. Those attending religious services three or more times reported more negative attitudes toward and lower levels of sex knowledge. Lower sex knowledge, in turn, was related to negative attitudes toward non-heterosexual behavior as well as premarital sex and masturbation.

Based on the Ghana Demographic and Health Survey of 1993 for women aged 15 to 49, Addai (2000) found that religious affiliation was an important predictor of premarital sexual activities among ever-married women, but not among those who never married. Protestants and Catholics were more likely to experience premarital sex compared to Muslim women, sectarian christians, and women with no religion. Muslim women also reported the least premarital sexual experience compared to other groups controlling for all factors. In a cross-cultural sample of 16,604 participants from 15 countries, Scheepers et. al. (2002) found that parental and individual religiosity had strong effects on moral

attitudes. Effects of individual religiosity appeared to be stronger in more religious countries.

Contrary to most of the literature cited above, in a sample of 191 single male and 232 single female participants whose ages ranged from 17 to 25, Jensen et. al. (1990) found that only sexual permissiveness had a main effect on sexual behavior, and that religious attendance did not have a significant effect overall except that non-permissive participants who attended church every week had one of the highest frequencies of sexual activity. Djamba (1995) similarly found no religious difference in premarital sexual behavior in a sample of 515 married women from Kinshasa, Zaire with a mean age of 33 years.

In brief, religions themselves change over time. The fluctuation within a religion over time, as well as differences between religious groups have significant effects on individuals' attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. However, higher religiosity seems to consistently and positively correlate with negative attitudes across time and religious groups.

#### *Personal Determinants of Premarital Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors*

##### *Age*

Schofield (1965, in DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) reported that least intimate behaviors (such as kissing) were more prevalent than the most intimate behaviors (such as sexual intercourse) at a given age. Ehrman (1959, in DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) reported that age at first date and participation in more intimate sexual behavior are positively correlated. Schofield (1959, in DeLamater and

MacCorquodale, 1979) similarly reported that age at first date and experience of sexual intercourse were positively correlated.

Herold and Goodwin (1981) found age to be among a number of factors that affect premarital sexual behavior. In a sample of 155 male and 218 female undergraduates between the ages of 17 and 43, Lafuente and Valcárcel (1984) found that younger and older participants tended to disapprove premarital sexual relations, while participants aged 20 to 25 show more approval. In a sample of 657 Australian adults aged between 17 and 69, Hong (1985) found that age as well as church attendance influenced premarital sexual attitudes. More recently, Bersamin et. al. (2006) found increase in age to be among variables that predicted higher occurrence of both oral and vaginal sex.

#### *Personal Attitudes, Beliefs, And Intentions*

Reiss (1960) argued that individuals' standards derive from their culture. It seems, overall, that a number of personal normative attitudes are related to both premarital sexual attitudes and behaviors. Such variables may include social desirability, self-esteem, sexual guilt, political views, factors underlying intentions such as curiosity or excitement, and general sexual attitudes etc. Individuals' attitudes towards premarital sex also tend to have a strong effect on their premarital sexual activities. Christensen and Gregg (1970, in DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) and Kaats and Davis (1972, in DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) concluded that the most effective forecaster of one's sexual behavior was one's own sexual standards.

Lafuente and Valcárcel (1984) found that political views were significantly related to



sexual attitudes in that those who indicated they were right-wing, center, or “other” were more opposed to sexual relations. Trlin et. al. (1983) found, in a sample of 495 never married 18 to 25 years old participants from Australia, that attitudes towards premarital sex emerged as the dominant factor determining premarital sexual behavior for both genders. Chitanum and Finchilescu (2003) found, in a sample of 100 female heterosexual university students, that both attitudes and subjective norms predicted sexual intentions, while the effect of attitudes was stronger than subjective norms.

#### *Dating Behavior*

It seems that dating frequency and commitment play an important role in determining premarital sexual attitudes and behaviors. Croake and James (1972) investigated the relationship between sexual behavior ranging from french kissing to sexual intercourse and seven levels of commitment. They found that the more the commitment in sexual behavior between partners, the more the liberalization of attitudes toward such behavior. Schulz et. al. (1977) found that greater exposure to potential sex partners through dating frequency had a positive effect on premarital sexual behavior.

In a study of 480 females, Herold and Goodwin (1981) found that dating commitment and dating frequency were among the variables that had a significant effect on the so-called virginity status. Dating commitment was the second most effective variable in predicting virginity status following parental acceptance of premarital intercourse, followed by religiosity. Analyzing the data from a 1967 Kinsey institute sample, Reed and Weinberg (1984) found that dating serially or going steady and dating frequency had no effect on

premarital sexual behavior. On the other hand, Barber et. al. (2000) found that dating frequency predicted the timing of first intercourse together with the marital status of participants' parents. Investigating data from 54 white, monogamously dating undergraduate couples, Christopher and Cate (1988) found that the influence of love increased with developing emotional interdependence in a relationship in predicting sexual intimacy.

#### *Prior Sexual Experience*

It seems that the presence or absence of prior sexual experience is an important variable affecting attitudes toward premarital sexuality. However, the reader should be aware that not all studies define sexual experience with regard to consent. As noted by Reynolds (1994), some studies categorize participants purely on a “virginity dichotomy” (e.g. “virgin” vs. “non-virgin”) or neglect to include a clear definition for the participant of what they mean by “sexual experience” or “virginity”. Consequently, their results disregard the importance of consent in women's sexual experiences. It is relatively difficult to evaluate these studies' conceptualizations of sex, as there is very limited direct access to the instruments that the researchers employed.

Thomas (1975) found that more sexual experience was consistently related to lower conservatism and favorable attitudes toward premarital sex, especially for females. Sorensen (1972, in DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) reported that the extent of sexual experience is positively correlated with having intercourse earlier, having more partners, and greater frequency of sexual intercourse. Comparing 40 Indian participants between the ages of 19 and 23 on prior sexual experience, Parsuram (1988) found that those with prior sexual

experience were more permissive toward premarital sex while those with no prior sexual experience were more conservative and religious. Similarly, Salts et. al. (1994) found that undergraduates with prior sexual experience had less favorable attitudes toward marriage when compared to those without any prior sexual experience. McKelvey et. al. (1999) found that, although the most important background variable explaining both attitudes toward and knowledge of sex was the frequency of religious attendance, prior sexual experience was among the other variables which had a significant effect on the dependent variables.

#### *Parents*

Sorensen's (1972), Schofield's (1965, in DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979), and Reiss' (1960) studies revealed that families were less permissive, thus individuals more attached to their families also tended to be less permissive. Walsh, Ferrell, and Tolone (1976, in DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) indicated that a shift from parents to peers as reference groups resulted in an increase of sexual permissiveness.

Herold and Goodwin (1981) found parental acceptance of premarital sexual behavior among the variables that had a significant effect on the so-called virginity status of participants. Using data from a national sample of white participants between the ages of 15 to 16, Moore et. al. (1986) found little support for the argument that parental communication and monitoring discouraged adolescents from having premarital sexual experience. Kinnaird and Gerrard (1986) found that participants from divorced and reconstituted families reported significantly more sexual experience than those from intact

families. The authors asserted that family conflict, disruption, and the presence of a father were significant predictors of both dating behavior and attitudes. In a sample from Nigeria, Hollow and Leis (1986) similarly argued that permissive premarital sexual attitudes were positively correlated with higher levels of parental care taking. However Bersamin et. al. (2006) found that parental communication was related to the experience of vaginal sex, while it had no effect on oral sex.

On the other hand, Djamba (2003) suggested, due to the positive correlation found between number of siblings and premarital sexual activity in a sample from the Democratic Republic of Congo, that a weakening of adults' attention to children in larger families may be a contributing factor to adolescents' premarital sexual activities. Similarly, Langille and Curtis (2002) found that participants under 15 years of age who had intercourse were less likely to live with both parents, to have highly educated parents, and to have fathers employed full time. Living with someone other than both parents was also positively associated with sexual experience before 15 years of age. Barber et. al. (2000) also found that women having parents who never divorced delayed the timing of first intercourse.

Baker et. al. (1988) found that while parents' normative beliefs had a limited effect on adolescents' decisions to become sexually active, these beliefs explained 5% of the variance in adolescents' prior sexual experience. Using nonrandom availability sampling, Werner-Wilson (1998) found that number of siblings, number of parents, communication with mother and father, parental contribution to sex education, parental discussion of sexual values, and the sexual attitudes of the mother and the father explained some of the variance

in adolescents' sexual attitudes. Although both individual characteristics and familial characteristics were more powerful together in explaining these attitudes, females found to be more influenced by familial characteristics.

### *Peers*

Ehrman (1959, in DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) identified three major codes of sexual conduct: (social code, personal code, and peer code). Ehrman found that peer codes were generally more permissive than personal codes. Personal codes were closely associated with the intimate behaviors engaged in.

Although Medora (1982) found that fraternity and sorority membership did not have an effect on participants' attitudes toward premarital sex, peer influence seems to play an important role in determining individuals' premarital sexual attitudes and behaviors. In a national probability sample of 1177 white college student, Spanier (1976) investigated how classroom instructions on sex (formal sex education) and familial, peer, and societal influences (informal sex education) affected premarital sexual behavior. The study found that current influences and pressures explained variance in past and present premarital sexual involvement more than past informal sex education, which in turn explained more variance when compared to formal sex education. The researcher suggested that experiences and pressures in a given dating or peer group had more influence on premarital sexual behavior than other past sexual socialization.

Schulz et. al. (1977) similarly found that each additional friend (out of five) who had prior sexual experience increased the likelihood of the participant engaging in premarital

sexuality by 12% to 14%. Sack et. al. (1984) found, that degree of approval from close friends was associated with the prior sexual experience of their female participants. Reed and Weinberg (1984) found perceptions of friends' sexual behavior to have a direct effect on premarital sexual behavior for women who were in a committed relationship but not for women who were dating serially. Friedman (2004) found that peers' communication of sex-related topics and perceived peer and sibling approval of sexuality were significantly related to participants' sexual attitudes and behavior. Perceived peer approval was the most powerful factor in this study.

#### *Educational Environment*

In the following studies, education was considered a less important background variable in terms of premarital sexual behavior and attitudes. Djamba (1995) found that higher education increased the likelihood of premarital sexual activity among university level educated women. In a sample from Vietnam, Ghuman (2005) found that, although positive attitudes toward premarital sex did not constitute a majority among more educated participants, having more education increased the acceptance of premarital sex, along with living in urban areas and being married after late 1980s. Mensh et. al. (2001), on the other hand, found that for female participants, education in a gender-neutral school decreased the likelihood of premarital sex.

#### *Social Class*

Similar to educational environment, social class seemed to be considered a less important factor influencing premarital sexual behavior and attitudes. Medora (1982) found

that socioeconomic status was not a factor with significant effect on participants' premarital sexual attitudes. On the other hand, Bell (1966) found that although premarital sexual attitudes were more permissive in lower class participants, advanced sexual expressions were also stigmatized by lower class norms at the time. Bell also found that premarital sexual experiences were highest among middle class and upper class participants, the author suggested that this was because of the delayed age of marriage among these groups. In addition, participants experiencing upper social movement were found to be more conservative than participants already a member of upper classes without social mobility. McKelvey et. al. (1999) also found that lower family income was among the factors (such as no prior sexual experience, right-wing political orientation, gender, and ethnicity) that had a negative influence on permissive premarital sexual attitudes among medical and nursing students. Finally, Djamba (2003) found that poverty, along with exposure to mass media, patrilinearity, and AIDS awareness, decreased the occurrence of premarital sexual activity among the participants from Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo.

### *Summary*

In above mentioned American-based studies, time emerges as an important factor when one investigates social norms. A number of studies show that premarital sexual standards tend to become more liberal and more egalitarian between sexes over time, although there are some fluctuations. External and internal attempts of modernization seems to play an important and sometimes negative role in the determination of attitudes towards premarital sexuality. Studies tend to demonstrate significant differences between different

cultures and nations. Higher religiosity seems to consistently and positively correlate with negative attitudes across time and religious groups. Age is identified as a predicting variable, although its effects are inconsistent across studies. Among personal attitudes, premarital sexual attitudes seem to be affected by one's own sexual standards, political views, subjective norms. Dating frequency and commitment play an important role as well: an increase in both positively correlate with more permissive attitudes toward premarital sexuality. Having prior sexual experience also increases such permissive attitudes. Perhaps as opposite forces, parents and peers also affect premarital sexual permissiveness, through sexual socialization in numerous ways. The effects of education and social class surface in some studies, even though most studies attach such background variables less value. People with more education and higher social class tend to have more permissive premarital sexual attitudes.

#### Premarital Sexual Attitudes And Behaviors In The Turkish Context

When discussing attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality in Turkey, one finds that the literature shifts its emphasis from abstract theories and assumptions, to the significance of Islam and the concept of virginity in Turkish women's lives. As such, this section will briefly discuss Islamic views on women's sexuality to give the reader some background. Following this, the concept of virginity, virginity examinations, and hymen will be discussed briefly. This section will be concluded with a statistical picture of Turkish attitudes towards sexuality in general, and specifically women's premarital sexuality.

In order to better make sense of the inner workings of the Turkish society on any



issue, it is crucial for the reader to note the lack of investment in Eastern Turkey as a result of the ethnic conflicts, and especially the civil war between the Turkish government and the eastern Kurdish population. These conflicts resulted in an industrialized and urbanized Western Turkey and a semi feudal, tribal, highly patriarchal social structure in eastern Turkey. This had a very significant and negative impact on eastern Turkish women's rights and lives, which includes the compulsory and forced nature of marriage (Ilkcaracan, 2001).

#### *Islam And Women's Sexuality*

Some researchers seemed to hesitate very little before labeling Turkey as the only modern, democratic, and Islamic nation in the world and Turkish women's status as an anomaly in the Islamic world (Muftuler-Bac, 1999). With relation to Islam, in terms of the extent of its secularism, Turkey seems rather unique in the world. Despite a long history intermingled with religion, after Turkey was founded in 1923, several revolutionary and secular changes were introduced and these progressive reforms had a significant effect on women's lives (Ilkcaracan, 2001). Islam has long been simultaneously a threat to Turkey's secular democratic foundations and a foundation to Turkish society's deeply internalized social norms and values. For instance, Turkey's current prime minister, R. T. Erdogan, referring to Islamist terrorists' attacks, was famous for commenting “You cannot make me say that Islamist children kill people” (Insel, 2003, translated by Mehmet A. Ergun).

According to Moghissi (1999), although Islam “opposes celibacy and celebrates sexual pleasure” (p.22) unlike some other monotheist religions, it is scared of the intensity and the “tempting power” (p. 26) of female sexual pleasure.

“In Islamic societies, the woman's body generates fascination and pleasure. It is exploited for procreation, and as a symbol of communal dignity. It is manipulated and its activities are codified. It is covered and confined. It is disciplined for defiance and is mutilated in anticipation of trespassing .... The female body is the site of struggle between the proponents and opponents of modernity and used as a playing card between imperial and anti-imperial political forces. In Islamic societies, sexuality, the site of love, desire, sexual fulfillment and physical procreation, is, at the same time, for women, the site of shame, confinement, anxiety, compulsion.” (Moghissi, 1999, p. 20)

As Ilkkaracan suggests (2001), although Islam recognizes that both men and women have sexual needs and desires, and it represents eroticism as a positive concept, contrary to its conceptualization of the male sexuality, it perceives female sexuality as chaotic, uncontrollable, and emotional. Consequently, it asserts that social order requires male control over women's sexuality.

In his controversial textual analyses of Islam, Arsel (1997) examines how Islam perceives women and similarly observes a pattern, where women seem to be depicted as slaves and objects of pleasure for their husbands. He singles out Muhammad as one of the most successful architects in constructing women's role as servicing men's orders and domination (p. 590). He suggests that the aim of the institution of marriage in Islam is to give men the opportunity to act as they wish and to choose their “servants” according to criteria such as beauty, economic capital, religiosity, innocence, and virginity. As such, what women do before marriage is strictly controlled, because their past activities will predict how they will fit the above criteria and, consequently, whether they will be “worthy” to be chosen by a potential husband as wife / slave.

In brief, Islamic traditions, illusions, and beliefs, which are deeply intermingled into the social norms and values of Turkish society, significantly influence the way women's sexuality is constructed around male needs and interests. Although my literature review did not reveal any study conducted on Turkish participants focusing primarily on the relationship between the Turkish Islamic beliefs and traditions and premarital sexual attitudes, it is reasonable to suggest that Islam's negative effect on women's sexuality would show itself in women's premarital sexuality as well. I would expect that much of this effect would be in relation to the Islamic conceptualization of and focus on virginity, and the Turkish construction of honor in relation to virginity.

*Virginity And Women's Premarital Sexuality In Turkey*

“Women's base in Turkey, from childhood on, starts with hiding one's pussy from those who expose their pee-pees. And that's exactly why honor is in between two legs. A woman spends her life trying to protect her virginity that she takes over from her father to her husband. Because there is always the risk of becoming a “bad woman” and ending up in streets as a target. She considers being touched and sex before marriage, which was already demonized at the beginning, as a curse, and thus she reproduces this vicious / male circle herself.” (Elmas, 2005, translated by Mehmet A. Ergun)

It seems the relationship between purity and chastity in Islam is overwhelmingly found in the norms and beliefs of Turkish society. The society pressures Turkish women to remain virgins until marriage, while males are expected to explore sexuality before marriage (Cok et al., 2001). According to Muftuler-Bac (1999), the prohibition of premarital as well as extramarital and non-marital sexuality are related to the concept of sexual purity of women. “The strong codes of conduct, which define women's sexual behavior, are used as

an instrument to keep women under the control of their fathers, husbands, and brothers who assume responsibility for ensuring 'their' women retain their chastity” (Ilkkaracan and Seral, 2000, p. 189). Such codes embed negative attitudes into society's conceptualization of women's sexuality and are used as internalized restrictions on women's sexual activities. Consequently, women cannot make free decisions on their sexual behaviors and experience their sexual being with lack of control, violence, and abuse, but “certainly not with pleasure” (Ilkkaracan and Seral, 2000, p. 189). Pelin (1999) explains the implications of such prohibitions on women's premarital sexuality as follows:

“Premarital sex for a woman is regarded as wrong in my country. As a result, it is socially forbidden for a woman to engage in this act. In order to present a woman as a virgin on her marriage day, she is subjected to pressure, and put under control both by her family and societal norms. However, a man is free and never made to suffer any of the above. A woman found to be a virgin on her first night of marriage is seen as a normal person while one suspected to have lost her virginity is made to undergo a series of medical examinations to bring clarity to her situation.” (Pelin, 1999, p. 256.)

In brief, the Turkish culture regards premarital sex as highly inappropriate for women (Wasti and Cortine, 2002; Kayir, 2000; Aydin and Gulcat; Duyan and Duyan, 2005) and the taboos on premarital sexual relationships add up to concerns over women's hymens (Cindoglu, 1997). Moreover, virginity is not just a temporary issue to be dealt with until marriage: “It is arguably one of the most important concepts that define women's sexuality in Turkey and the means of its control.” (Altinay, 2000, p. 403).

The effect of the concept of hymen and virginity is extremely powerful not only on women's premarital sexuality, but also on women's overall sexual lives. For instance, as a

woman with prior premarital sexual experience, a friend of mine received the following confrontational remark from one of her close male friends: “Regardless of how modern a Turkish man could be, he would never want to marry you because you are sexually experienced.” (Personal conversation, Anonymous, 2006, translated by Mehmet A. Ergun). Qualitative studies reported similar remarks from participants that signal a deep conflict between women who have premarital sex and the overall Turkish society:

“I had to convince my husband that I was a virgin when we got married. I still keep the doctors reports pronouncing me a virgin, 'just in case' anyone questions this in the future.” (Ilkcaracan and Seral, 2000, p. 194).

“A friend of mine who was not a virgin arranged her wedding night to coincide with her period; she even changed the date when she realized it was going to be off by a few days” (Ilkcaracan and Seral, 2000, p. 194).

“I think about the day after my first sexual relationship. Until that day, my ideas were so clear. I had protested against all taboos about my body ... I remember the shock and the agitation that I felt the day after my first sexual relationship when I realized there was no going back and that I was experiencing a horrible feeling of guilt.” (Altinay, 2000, p. 407).

Investigating the risks to women's sexual health of 20 Turkish women, most of whom were born in Turkey and immigrated to Australia before 1985 and currently live in Melbourne Australia, Gifford et. al. (1998) encountered a similar pattern: The discourse about sexual health risks focused around the concepts of honor and shame. Turkish women spoke of protecting their honor and avoiding the risk of bringing shame to themselves and to their families essentially by protecting their virginity until marriage. In this context, it is

not surprising that the most known female “sexual organ”, at least in Eastern Turkey, was the hymen (Türkiye ilk cinsel bilgilerini kimden alıyor, 2005).

While premarital female virginity has an extremely significant societal value attached to it, it is also considered an important patriarchal social norm used to control women's sexual behavior (Ayotte, 2000). Virginity examinations are a powerful mechanism for the family and the state to promote the social value of the hymen and the stigma attached to women's premarital sexual activities. Alkan et. al. (2002) observed 27,376 gynecological examinations done between January 1, 1999 and June 20, 2001. They found that 1.5% of these were done for “social and legal reasons”. Of these, 57% of gynecological examinations were in fact virginity examinations.

The decision to engage in premarital sex involves the high risk of being forced into undergoing a virginity examination, for instance by head teachers, employers, law enforcement agents, parents, and so on (Pelin, 1999; although currently, only prosecutors and judges can lawfully order virginity examinations). While its psychological effects may lead to suicide (Saribas, 2005), its results may lead to violence against women, and even murder. While a virginity examination might cause the woman under question be murdered in the name of honor, it is only one of the many reasons/excuses of honor killings. Kocacioglu (2004) defines “honor crimes” as “the murder of a woman by members of her family who do not approve of her sexual behavior” (p. 118). According to Kocacioglu (2004), 53 women were estimated to be murdered between 1994 – 1996. Reasons for such murders range from suspected premarital sexual activities to liking to go out too much

(Yirmibesoglu, 2000; Duzkan and Kocali, 2000).

As Parla suggests (2001), the effect of the fear of losing virginity is so powerful in Turkey that it is one of strategies anti-terror police employs for terrorizing and humiliating Kurdish women. In Parla's terms, in the context of anti-terror police, virginity is used as a weapon against the “enemies of the state” (p. 81). In the context of “civil” life, on the other hand, it is used as a tool to regulate sexuality. In both contexts, the variable that remains constant is construction of gender-specific shame (Parla, 2001). The involvement of the state can also be observed in other circumstances such as a former Minister of Health ordering regular monthly virginity tests for female patients of a mental hospital (Muftuler-Bac, 1999).

*A Statistical Picture Of Women's Premarital Sexuality In Turkey*

It should be noted that research on sex in Turkey is scarce. “While sex research is blooming in the United States ..., it is almost nonexistent in Turkey, partly because the antisexualism that has prevailed in Turkish culture can make such studies risky” (Erkmen et al, 1990, p. 251). Such risks range from experiences of stigmatization in the Turkish academic milieu to experiences of various degrees of physical violence (Kayar, 2005) and even life threats as the researchers will have to challenge existing sensitive Turkish social norms and values as s/he proceeds with her/his research.

Ambivalent sexism theory (Sakalli-Ugurlu and Glick, 2003) claims that traditional attitudes toward women have a benevolent and a hostile component. Benevolent sexism can be defined as a set of beliefs that reinforce the assumption that women are the weaker sex

and therefore require men's protection, only if they confirm to social norms prescribed to them. Those who do not conform to such norms are subject to hostile sexism, which perceives women as seeking to gain control over men. With regard to sexuality, benevolent sexism emphasize that women need to be purer than men while hostile sexism expresses fear that women may gain power over men within romantic relationships. Benevolent sexism idealizes and regards women who remain sexually “pure,” while hostile sexism punishes those who are sexually deviant.

Investigating the effects of ambivalent sexism on attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality on a sample of 124 undergraduates and 60 non-students, Sakalli-Ugurlu and Glick (2003) found that males had significantly more sexual experience and they scored higher in hostile sexism than women, while women scored higher in benevolent sexism. Men expressed more negative attitudes toward women who engage in premarital sex, but the average score of men's willingness to marry a non-virgin was close to the midpoint of the scale used. Benevolent sexism was related to negative premarital attitudes in both men and women but hostile sexism significantly predicted negative premarital attitudes among only men.

While hostile sexism was correlated with negative attitudes toward women's premarital sex for men only, it was not a predictor once other variables were controlled. Benevolent sexism and hostile sexism both correlated with men's unwillingness to marry a non-virgin. The authors argued that because hostile sexism characterizes women as power hungry, marrying a sexually experienced woman is very threatening to a male ego high on



hostile sexism. Similarly, highly benevolent sexist men would think that women who are sexually experienced before marriage are likely to challenge traditional roles, threatening the power held by men in a marriage.

Exploring women's sexuality in Eastern Turkey with a sample of 599 women between the ages of 14 and 75, Ilkkaracan's (2000) findings on marriage implies that there is a sharp contrast between university student samples and samples from Eastern Turkey with regard to sexual practices and attitudes. Ninety seven percent of all participants older than 24 years of age were married, which indicated that marriage is compulsory in the region for women. Mean age at first religious marriage was 17.9. Almost half of the participants were not asked for her opinion to marry, married without consent, and/or did not meet their husband before marriage.

Muftuler-Bac (1999) reported that the most conservative group among the participants were older (between the ages of 55 and 59 years), married women with children of their own. Ninety four percent of this group were opposed to notions such as premarital sex and single women living on their own.

After surveying 145 women and 172 men from inner Anatolia between the ages of 18 and 31, Duyan and Duyan (2005) found that the participants were more accepting and liberal for others' sexual preferences and activities than their own. Erkmen et. al. (1990) found, among the male and female undergraduates, that more than half reported that “virginity is a girl's most valuable possession”.

Kayar (2005) reported on a study that examined the attitudes, beliefs, norms, and

values in Turkey with a sample of 208 participants older than 13, from 17 different cities. Similar to Erkmen's (1990) and Ilkkaracan's (2000) findings, more than half of the participants and almost all participants in Eastern Turkey reported that virginity was the symbol of a woman's honor. About half of the respondents reported that virginity is the father's/husband's honor, while only 28.4% agreed that it was normal to experience sexuality without damaging the hymen. (Bekaret konusunda ikiyüzlüyüz, 2005).

Eighty five percent overall and 95% of conservatives agreed that hymen should be “broken” only after marriage. Almost all of the conservatives also reported that virginity was the symbol of honor, that virginity was husband's/father's honor, and that men should only marry virgins. Although more than half of the liberal participants agreed with the above statements, the rates were lower when compared to conservatives. (Bekaret konusunda ikiyüzlüyüz, 2005).

The study also found that premarital cohabitation was unacceptable for almost half of the participants while only 16% found it acceptable. Mothers were more permissive toward flirting than fathers, while only 4.5% of parents reported it was okay for their daughters to have premarital sexual experience. Upper class parents were more liberal (16%) when compared to lower class parents (2%). There were no parents from Eastern Turkey who reported their daughters' premarital sexual experiences as acceptable. Of those who were identified as conservative, only 1.5% reported that premarital sexual experience was acceptable for their daughters.

Similar to the above research that implies Turkish populations tend to be restrictive

toward women's premarital sex, in a study investigating 101 nurses' and midwives' views of virginity examinations, Gursoy and Vural (2003) found that over half disapproved of premarital sex. As reasons for the importance of virginity, almost half reported social pressures while only about one tenth reported that virginity should not be so important because sex experience is an individual right.

Almost all participants opposed hymen examination and indicated that these examinations were being imposed on individuals without their consent. Yet, only about one tenth reported that performing an examination without consent was illegal. More than one third stated that virginity is the most valuable aspect of being a woman while the majority believed that virginity was not important for either genders.

Most participants were unwilling to accept and/or sanction premarital sex activity of their daughters. Most reported that premarital sexual activities of their daughters would have negative consequences for the daughters such as forcing daughter to marry partner or arranging for hymenoplasty while only one tenth were comfortable with possible premarital sexual activities of their daughters.

Most reported that they would act as usual when a girl was undergoing the examination, although one tenth said they would remind the girl that premarital sex was morally wrong. Interestingly, only 4% said they would not resist if they were to take the examination themselves. Most participants did not report that they would remind the patient that she has the right to refuse the examination. A relatively high percentage of participants (14.9%) reported that suicide may be a necessity to maintain virginity.

In relation to such prevalent negative attitudes towards women's sexuality, Kayir (2000) suggests that the relatively high prevalence of “vaginismus” in Turkey, compared to other nations, was related to the socialization of girls which greatly emphasizes the role of “protect[ing] their hymen” (p. 263).

Ozan et. al. (2005) surveyed 201 1st and 6th year university students. Most of the males (68.7%) and a small minority of females (11.4%) had prior sexual experience. Sixth year males rated significantly higher than 1st year males on the number of prior sexual experiences. Females overall tended to have sex at a later age than males. While all females had prior sexual experience with a significant other, only about half of the 1st year and about one third of the 6th year male students reported having prior sexual experience with a significant other. As determinants of sexual attitudes & behaviors, most prevalent determinants for both genders were participants' own desires and values and social factors. Protection from STDs was more important for males while females rated family expectations as more prevalent. In addition, protecting virginity emerged as an important determinant of sexual attitudes and behaviors among 6<sup>th</sup> year female students while religious requirements were specifically important for 1<sup>st</sup> year female students

Parallel to Ozan. et. al.'s (2005) findings, Gokengin et. al. (2003) found that more than half of the participants indicated that they never engaged in sexual activity. Males, more educated students, and students with higher socioeconomic status tended to report more sexual activities. Most students had their first sexual experience between 15 and 19 years of age. No significant difference was found between male and female students or

among socioeconomic classes when compared for age at first sex. Males (39.3%) were significantly more prone to have sex with different and more partners than were females. The study also found that female participants adopted a more conservative attitude than males.

Ungan and Yaman (2003) and Ergene et. al. (2005) reported similarly that only a minority of undergraduate student (19% and 28% respectively) had prior sexual experience or were sexually active. Investigating university students' sexual behavior and attitudes, Cok et. al. (2001) found that most never had sex before. The percentage of females with no prior sexual experience was more than that of males. About one tenth of females had vaginal intercourse experience, compared to one third of males. Most prominent sexual behaviors for females were holding hands/hugging and kissing (50.7%), while males had a much more diverse repertoire of sexual behaviors, ranging from holding hands to masturbation. The authors concluded that societal pressures on Turkish women to remain virgins until marriage were highly effective, while males were expected to have sex before marriage.

Duyan and Duyan (2005) found that religiosity was correlated with sexual attitudes. Culpan and Marzotto (1982) similarly found, in a 1970 sample of 1,000 university students, that the importance of marriage was significantly correlated with religion and class.

Dilbaz et. al. (1992, in Gursoy and Vural, 2003) found that 85% of men expected women they marry to be virgins. Similarly, Irbas and Vargur (2002, in Gursoy and Vural, 2003) found that although the majority of university males reported they perceived no relation between honor and virginity, they expected their potential spouses to be virgin.

Ozturk (1998, in Gursoy and Vural, 2003) found that 55% of the university students thought virginity was important. Anonymous (1998, in Gursoy and Vural, 2003) found that 99% of female educators opposed forced virginity examinations while only 46% of female gynecologists agreed with the idea that hymen examination degrades women and leads to emotional distress.

### *Summary*

Sex research in Turkey is risky and scarce. In the Turkish context, available research demonstrated that Turkish populations tend to be restrictive toward premarital sex. Gender played an important role in predicting prior sexual experience and attitudes toward premarital sex. It seemed there was a sharp difference between Eastern and Western Turkey, where the latter tended to be more permissive than the former. Sexual experience, number of children, class, and age seemed to be positively correlated with permissiveness while religion was negatively correlated. Liberals tended to be more permissive compared to conservatives. Percentages of women never having premarital sex in reviewed studies ranged from 53.3% to 81% while men tended to have more premarital sex with more partners than women did. General societal disapproval rates of women's premarital sex in reviewed studies ranged from a permissive rate of 26.5% to an extremely conservative rate of 98%.

### Research Questions

This literature review demonstrated that time period, modernization attempts, region, religion, age, personal attitudes, dating behavior, prior sexual experience, parents

and peers, educational environment, and social class are variables that affect attitudes toward premarital sexuality in the U.S. Only a few researchers focused on women's responses and on attitudes toward women's premarital sex. This literature review also showed that Turkish populations tend to be restrictive toward premarital sex. Gender, region, sexual experience, number of children, class, age, and political views were variables that affected premarital sexual attitudes, while Islam and the concept of virginity had a culture-specific negative effect on women's sexual lives.

In the light of above findings, this research proposes to focus only on women's responses to attitudes toward women's premarital sex. As such, this is an attempt to fill the gap in sex research on women in Turkey. Based on the findings of previous researchers on the issue, this research proposes to explore the effects of background variables and attitudinal and behavioral variables on attitudes toward women's premarital sex in a female-only population.

## **Methodology**

### Data Collection

Data were collected through a nonrandom sample. Initially, 318 male and female students of the Istanbul University English Language and Literature Department voluntarily participated in this study. There were 41 males (14%) and 277 females (87.1%). The Department reported that the total number of their student body was close to 450, at the time, with approximately 15% males and 85% females. Accordingly, the participation rate was 70.6%. The response ratio of females to males in this study is roughly reflective of the Department's overall gender ratio.

Given that the focus of current study is on women's attitudes towards sexuality, and because the number of male respondents is low, making comparative analysis problematic, the male data were excluded. Consequently, the final number of participants is 277 females. The age of these participants ranged from 17 to 39, with a mean of 21.26 (SD = 3.035). Forty four point eight percent of the students were between 21 and 22 years of age. Ninety four point six percent were never married. Ninety three point nine percent were born in Turkey. Forty one point three percent were born in Istanbul. The rest of the sample reported 61 different cities, 14 of them out of Turkey.

Data were collected using an anonymous survey consisting of 55 questions in Turkish (see Appendix A for the questionnaire in Turkish, Appendix B for questionnaire in English). Prior to the distribution of the survey, question 38 (based on the “Sexual Experience Inventory” by Brady and Levitt, 1965; see Appendices A or B for the questions,



and Appendix C for the letter from the Department) was deemed too sexually explicit by the chair of the Department and was dropped to avoid controversy and negative reactions from the administration of Istanbul University. The surveys were given to students between May 7<sup>th</sup> and May 11<sup>th</sup> of 2005, at the beginning of regularly scheduled classes. Participation was completely anonymous and voluntary. All participants were asked to fill out the survey as honestly as possible. Participants had the opportunity to discontinue their participation in the survey any time. After the surveys were completed and collected by the lecturers of each class, they were given to Dr. Zeynep Ergun, the chair of the Department.

#### Demographics

*Sex* was operationalized as either male or female. The researcher was aware that the continuing widespread enforcement of the gender binaries of maleness and femaleness is a constraint for individuals whose anatomies and/or “choices” (sic) do not correspond with these binaries (Preves, 2000). Preves demonstrates that the current dichotomization of sex is inadequate and that the researchers should not add to the demonization and stigmatization of individuals who do not fit into the categories of male and female, (e.g. intersexual, transsexual, and transgendered individuals). However, the concept of intersexuality is mostly unfamiliar and the categories transgender and transsexual are extremely closely associated with prostitution in Turkish society. At this relatively conservative phase of Turkish society, I was constrained to incorporate this weakness into my questionnaire by not including intersexuality, transsexualism, transgenderism, or categories other than male or female. This was also done in order to incorporate cultural

sensitivities into the questionnaire.

The other variables included in the analysis are *age in years*, *marital status*, *country of birth* (Turkey or other), *city of birth* (coded as “Istanbul” or “Other”), *ethnicity* (coded as “Turkish” or “Other”), *total monthly family income*, *number of children*, *residential partner* (parents and/or relatives or other), *employment status*, *parents' marital status*, *mother's and father's educational status* (primary school, middle school, high school, community college, university, graduate, other), and *social class* (measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = bottom class to 7 = top class).

#### Construction Of The Attitudinal And Behavioral Variables

Factor analyses were conducted to determine underlying structures of attitudinal and behavioral variables. Principal components analyses using varimax rotation were employed. After an initial analysis that produced principal components, two criteria were used to determine the accuracy of the analysis. These criteria were relative loadings (without rotation) of each variable vis-a-vis the others and the eigenvalue of each component ( $>1$ ).

Factor analysis is used to measure which common variables overlap and reflect an underlying structure, and hence can be combined into a scale. Primary component analysis, as an exploratory process, extracts common components in a given set of variables. The most common criterion to decide which components and variables to keep or to drop from the analysis is the eigenvalue, which is “the amount of total variance explained by each factor, with the total amount of variability in the analysis equal to the number of original

variables in the analysis” (Mertler and Vannatta, 2005, p. 250). The criterion used in this study is that only components with eigenvalues equal to or greater than one are retained. This is commonly referred to as the “Kaiser's rule” (Mertler and Vannatta, 2005, p. 250). Factor loadings are the Pearson correlation of each variable with the factor (Mertler and Vannatta, 2005). These reveal the extent to which each of the variables composing the factor are related to that factor. The criterion of relatively higher factor loadings was used in this study in order to keep only those variables that highly correlated with the factor. Total variance accounted for by each primary component indicates the degree of internal consistency of the variables.

Table 1 describes the factor analyses of the attitudinal and behavioral variables. A total of 10 factor analyses on 51 variables were performed. This produced a total number of 15 factors. For each of these factors, the eigenvalues were greater than one and loadings for each variable were relatively high. The variables comprising the various components were then combined into scales using regression analysis, which gives a weight to each of the variables comprising the scale equal to its correlation with the factor. Brief description of variables comprising the scales can be found in Table 1 and the full wording of the questions themselves in Appendix A and B.

Table 1. Factor Analyses of Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables

PC Analy sis	Components	Variables	Loadings*	Explained Variance	Eigenvalue
1	Political Participation	Monetary participation in political organizations	.85	72.59%	>1
		Participation in political meetings	.85		
2	Political Affiliation	Liberalism – Conservatism	.85	73.59%	>1
		Left-wing – Right-wing	.85		
3	Interest in Politics	Interest in national politics	.92	43.82%	>1
		Interest in international politics	.93		
	Attitudes toward Social Regulation	Attitudes toward economic liberalism	.70	25.64%	>1
		Separatism	.72		
4	Personal Religiosity	Effectiveness of religious beliefs in everyday life	.76	80.70%	>1
		Belief in god	.87		
		Role of prayer in everyday life	.90		
		Belief in religious miracles	.90		
		Belief in life after death	.90		
		Importance given to belief in god	.92		
		Belief in hell	.94		
		Belief in heaven	.95		
5	Political Religiosity	Anti-secularism	.73	64.27%	>1

		Veil in public sphere	.75		
		Mosque in public sphere	.83		
		Sharia	.83		
		Prayer in public sphere	.84		
6	Modern Sexism	General modern sexism	.64	39.00%	>1
		Job discrimination	.73		
		Spousal discrimination	.73		
		Success discrimination	.75		
	Attitudes toward Women's Organizations	Attitudes toward women's organizations – frustration	.93	26.12%	>1
		Attitudes toward women's organizations – struggle	.94		
7	Old-fashioned sexism	Job status discrimination	.65	41.09%	>1
		Sports discrimination	.66		
		Intellectual discrimination	.72		
		Logic discrimination	.77		
	Attitudes toward Unpaid Labor	Domestic labor discrimination	.88	20.63%	>1
8	Self-sex Quality	Sensitiveness of partner	.58	53.75%	>1
		Ability of partner	.66		
		General excitement	.68		
		Boredom	.74		
		Quality of partner	.82		

		Sexual attraction to partner	.85		
	Partner-sex Quality	Fun	.68	12.90%	>1
		Partner's Enjoyment	.85		
		Sexual attraction of partner	.87		
9	Sexual Attitudes	Sexual freedom	.67	64.13%	>1
		Homophobia	.68		
		Importance of sex	.69		
		Family values	.85		
		Extramarital sex	.87		
		Premarital sex sign of degeneration	.88		
		Sex reserved for marriage	.89		
10	Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality	Acceptability of women's premarital kissing	.80	79.54%	>1
		Acceptability of women's premarital intercourse	.92		
		Acceptability of women's premarital cuddling without clothes	.94		

\* If more than one component is extracted, loading values represent loading after rotation

#### *Political Participation, Denomination, And Attitudes*

Political participation is a scale that includes two questions with responses to each coded from 1 to 7, seven being higher participation. A factor analysis of these revealed one component. The component, *Political Participation*, accounted for 72.59% of the variance,

and was coded such that higher values mean higher participation.

Political affiliation is a scale that includes two questions with responses to each coded from 1 to 7, seven being right-wing conservatism. A factor analysis of these revealed one component. The component, *Political Affiliation*, accounted for 73.59% of the variance, and was coded such that higher values mean increasingly right and conservative political affiliation.

Political attitudes is a scale that includes 5 questions. A factor analysis of these produced two components, which were not confirmed by the criteria. After discarding *attitudes towards unions*, which loaded poorly on both components, the following analysis produced two components. The first component, *Interest in Politics*, was coded such that higher values mean higher interest in politics. The second component, *Attitudes toward Social Regulation*, was coded such that higher values mean increasingly negative attitudes towards social regulation and ethnic or religious organizations.

### *Religiosity*

Measuring religiosity is a very complicated subject for scientific measurement (DeVellis, 2003). Various approaches towards the dimensionality of conceptualizing religion exist. Early studies, as described by Wulff (1991), measure religiosity in terms of one dimension and thus by one homogeneous scale. Later studies, on the other hand, devise a multidimensional approach for the measurement of individuals' religiosity. The number of dimensions operationalized in previous studies range anywhere from 5 (Faulkner & Dejong, 1966) to 10 (King & Hunt, 1969).

In this study, personal religiosity and political religiosity were conceptualized as two important dimensions of religiosity. Personal religiosity is a scale that includes 9 questions, with responses to each coded from 1 to 7, seven being higher personal religiosity. A factor analysis of these produced one component, which was not confirmed by the criteria. After discarding *belief in devil*, which poorly loaded into the initial component, the following analysis produced one component. The component, *Personal Religiosity*, which explained 80.70% of the total variance, was coded such that higher values mean higher levels of personal religiosity.

Political religiosity is a scale that measures the extent to which participants believe religion should penetrate into the public sphere. It consists of 5 questions, coded from 1 to 7, seven being higher political religiosity. One component, *Political Religiosity*, which accounted for 64.27% of the total variation, was produced. It was coded such that higher values mean higher levels of political religiosity.

### *Sexism*

Sexism is a variable that might be related to both religiosity and attitudes towards premarital sexuality, especially because sexists will tend to regard women as property obtained through marriage or fatherhood. To examine this effect, the study included variables that attempt to measure old-fashioned (e.g. overt) and modern (e.g. covert) sexism, originally prepared by Morrison et. al. (1999). The questions used are rated especially successful when administered to university student samples (Morrison et al., 1999).



The concept of modern sexism was operationalized by 8 questions, coded from 1 to 7, seven indicating higher sexist attitudes. A factor analysis of these produced two components, which was not confirmed by the criteria. After discarding two questions, which loaded poorly on both components, the following analysis produced two components. The first component, *Modern Sexism*, was coded such that higher values mean higher modern sexist attitudes. The second component, *Attitudes towards Women's Organizations*, was coded such that higher values mean increasingly negative attitudes towards women's organizations.

The concept of old-fashioned sexism was operationalized by 5 questions, coded from 1 to 7, seven being higher sexist attitudes. A factor analysis of these produced two components. The first component, *Old-Fashioned Sexism*, was coded such that higher values mean higher old-fashioned sexist attitudes. The second component, *Attitudes toward Unpaid Labor*, was coded such that higher values mean increasingly positive attitudes towards men's exploitation of women's unpaid labor.

### *Sexual Practices*

Sexual practices are measured along three dimensions: sexual orientation, prior sexual experience, and the quality of sex life. Prior sexual experience was operationalized as any experience that the participant thought was sexual, during the last 3 or 4 years (*prior sexual experience*). Sexual orientation was measured by a 7-point Likert scale (1=attracted to men only, 4=attracted to both sexes, 7=attracted to women only). The quality of sex life was operationalized by 10 questions, coded from 1 to 7, seven being better quality of sex

life. A factor analysis of these produced two components, which were not confirmed by the criteria. After discarding *self-perceived quality of sex life*, which was poorly loading, the following analysis revealed two components. The first component, *Self-sex Quality*, was coded such that higher values mean better self-sex quality. The second component, *Partner-sex Quality*, was coded such that higher values mean better partner-sex quality.

#### *Sexual Attitudes And Attitudes Towards Premarital Sexuality*

Sexual attitudes (based on the “Sexual Attitude Scale”, Hudson et al., 1983) was operationalized in terms by 11 questions, coded from 1 to 7, seven being liberal sexual attitudes. A factor analysis of these produced one component, which was not confirmed by the criteria. After discarding *privacy*, *masturbation*, *sex education*, and *procreation*, which loaded poorly into the initial component, the following analysis produced only one component. This component, *Sexual Attitudes*, which explained 64.13% of the total variance, was coded such that higher values mean liberal sexual attitudes.

Finally, attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality is a scale that includes 4 variables, coded from 1 to 4, four being more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sex. This scale is based on Reiss' (1960) premarital sexual standards. A factor analysis of these produced only one component. This component, *Attitudes towards Women's Premarital Sexuality*, which explained 79.54% of the total variation, was coded such that higher values mean more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics Of Participants' Background Variables

Table 2 presents means, standard errors, standard deviations, minimums, and maximums for age, total monthly family income, number of children, and social class. Accordingly, participants had a mean age of 21.26 (SD = 3.03) and a mean total monthly family income of 1,949 New Turkish Liras, Turkey's currency (SD = 1,856). Most participants did not have any children and they mostly reported being members of the middle to upper social classes.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Demographics

			St. Error
Respondent's Age in Years	Mean	21.26	.18
	Std. Deviation	3.03	
	Minimum	17.00	
	Maximum	39.00	
Total Monthly Family Income	Mean	1949.07	126.31
	Std. Deviation	1856.38	
	Minimum	250.00	
	Maximum	15000.00	
Number of Children	Mean	.04	.01
	Std. Deviation	.24	
	Minimum	.00	
	Maximum	2.00	
Social Class (1 = Bottom; 7 = Top)	Mean	4.46	.05
	Std. Deviation	.84	
	Minimum	2.00	
	Maximum	7.00	

Table 3 presents frequencies and percentages for various demographic variables, prior sexual experience, and sexual orientation. Almost half of the participants were between 20 and 21 years of age. Forty four percent have no prior sexual experience and most (73.3%) classified themselves as strictly heterosexual. Ninety four point six percent was never married. Ninety three point nine percent were born in Turkey. Almost half were born in Istanbul, 80.1% indicating a Turkish ethnicity. In terms of residency, 60.6% are living with a friend or relative, and 26.4% are currently employed. Respondents living with their parents or relatives were significantly younger than those living with other residential partners ( $F(1,269) = 10.879, p < .005$ ). Eighty three point four percent of the participants had an intact family. Their mothers' attended mostly primary school (29.6%) and high school (35%) while their fathers' attended mostly high school (28.8%) and university (32.9%). According to a one-sample t-test, fathers (mean = 3.313, SD = 1.535) were significantly more educated than mothers (mean = 2.780, SD = 1.525,  $p < .001$ ).

Table 3. Frequencies on Selected Demographic Variables

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Respondent's Age	Between 17 and 19 inclusive	61	22.0	22.0	22.0
	Between 20 and 21	124	44.8	44.8	66.8
	22	44	15.9	15.9	82.7
	23 or higher	44	15.9	15.9	98.6
	Missing	4	1.4	1.4	
	Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%
Respondent's Marital Status	Never Married	262	94.6	95.6	95.6
	Divorced	1	0.4	0.4	96.0
	Married	11	4.0	4.0	
	Missing	3	1.1		
	Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%
City of Birth	Istanbul	142	51.3	54.0	54.0
	Other City	121	43.7	46.0	
	Missing	14	5.1		
	Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%
Employment	Yes	73	26.4	26.6	26.6
	No	201	72.6	73.4	
	Missing	3	1.1		
	Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%
Marital Status of Parents	Divorced	25	9.0	9.5	9.5
	Separated	7	2.5	2.7	12.2
	Married	231	83.4	87.8	
	Missing	14	5.1		
	Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%
Mother's Educational Background	Primary School	82	29.6	30.6	30.6
	Middle School	24	8.7	9.0	39.6

	High School	97	35.0	36.2	75.7
	Community College	18	6.5	6.7	82.5
	University	44	15.9	16.4	98.9
	Graduate School	3	1.1	1.1	
	Missing	9	3.2		
	Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%
Father's Educational Background	Primary School	49	17.7	18.3	18.3
	Middle School	30	10.8	11.2	29.5
	High School	80	28.9	29.9	59.3
	Community College	12	4.3	4.5	63.8
	University	91	32.9	34.0	97.8
	Graduate	6	2.2	2.2	
	Missing	9	3.2		
	Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%
Residential Partner	Relatives or parents	168	60.6	61.3	61.3
	Other	106	38.3	38.7	
	Missing	3	1.1		
	Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%
Prior Sexual Experience	No	122	44.0	47.8	47.8
	Yes	133	48.0	52.2	
	Missing	22	7.9		
	Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%
Sexual Orientation	Attracted to men only	203	73.3	79.6	79.6
	2	26	9.4	10.2	89.8
	3	8	2.9	3.1	92.9
	Both sexes	15	5.4	5.9	98.8
	5	1	0.4	0.4	99.2
	6	1	0.4	0.4	99.6

Attracted to women only	1	0.4	0.4	
Missing	22	7.9		
Total	N=277	100%	100%	100%

### Regression Analyses

#### *Relationships Between Background Variables And Attitudes Toward Women's Premarital Sexuality*

The primary purpose of doing a multiple regression analysis is to create an equation that will predict the values on a dependent variable from a weighted combination of some independent variables. These values are calculated for a given population. More specifically, *stepwise* multiple regression with *forward* selection, the main analysis technique used in this research, is often used in exploratory studies (Aron and Aron, 1999, In Mertler and Vannatta, 2005). Its aim is to determine those independent variables that make the most significant contribution in predicting the values of the dependent variable. During the forward selection, independent variables are entered into the equation in an order, from the most contributing to the least contributing, until predictor variables do not significantly contribute to the equation any more (Mertler and Vannatta, 2005).

A forward multiple regression was conducted to determine which background variables were the best predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Table 4 presents the regression results. These results indicate mother's educational background, age, ethnicity, and employment status are the best predictors of attitudes toward women's

premarital sexuality, with an  $R^2 = .205$ ,  $p < .001$ . Thus, this model accounted for 20.5% of variance in attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Having a mother who is highly educated, being older, employed, and non-Turkish predicted more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sex. Mother's education was the strongest predictor.

Table 4. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Background Variables

	Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality $\beta$
Mother's education	.314*
Age	.194**
Ethnicity	-.169**
Employment status	-.156**
Sexual orientation	.093
City of birth	.078
Total monthly family income	-.054
Number of children	-.040
Residential partner	-.019
Father's educational background	.094
Social class	-.096
R	.453
R Square	.205

\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

To explore the effect of prior sexual experience on how background variables predict attitudes toward premarital sexuality, another forward multiple regression was conducted for women who did not have prior sexual experience. Table 5 presents the



regression results. These results show mother's educational background and ethnicity as the best predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality,  $R^2 = .319$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Compared to the previous model, this model accounted for more (31.9%) of variance in attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Having a mother with higher education and being non-Turkish correlated with more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sex. Mother's education was again the strongest predictor, and its effect was stronger as compared to when all respondents are examined.

Table 5. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Background Variables for Respondents with No Prior Sexual Experience

	Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality $\beta$
Mother's educational background	.488*
Ethnicity	-.281*
Age	.162
Sexual orientation	.051
City of birth	-.001
Income	.093
Number of children	-.203
Residential partner	-.010
Employment status	-.128
Father's educational background	.065
Social class	-.109
R	.565
R Square	.319

\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

Although another forward multiple regression was conducted for participants who had prior sexual experience, the regression revealed no significant predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality for this group.

*Relationships Between Attitudinal And Behavioral Variables And Attitudes Toward Women's Premarital Sexuality*

A forward multiple regression was conducted to determine which attitudinal and behavioral variables were the predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Table 6 presents these regression results, which show only one predictor, sexual attitudes,  $R^2 = .393$ ,  $p < .001$ . This model accounted for 39.3% of variance in attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Liberal sexual attitudes predicted more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sex.

Table 6. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal Variable's

	Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality $\beta$
Sexual attitudes	.627*
Political participation	.080
Interest in politics	.070
Attitudes toward women's org.	.026
Attitudes toward unpaid labor	.055
Attitudes toward social regulation	.046
Political affiliation	-.015
Personal religiosity	-.079
Political religiosity	-.042
Modern sexism	-.077
Old-fashioned sexism	.041
R	.627
R Square	.393

\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

Due to the overwhelmingly strong effect of sexual attitudes and its significant correlation to a number of other attitudinal and behavioral variables, a second test was conducted, which excluded sexual attitudes from the equation. Table 7 presents these regression results, which demonstrate that personal religiosity, political religiosity, and political participation are the variables most highly correlated with attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality,  $R^2 = .304$ ,  $p < .001$ . This model accounted for less (30.4%) of the variance in attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality when compared to the previous regression. Respondents with higher rates of political participation and lower

personal and political religiosity tended to be more permissive in their attitudes toward women's premarital sex. Overall, political religiosity was the best predictor.

Table 7. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables Excluding Sexual Attitudes

	Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality
	$\beta$
Personal religiosity	-.278*
Political religiosity	-.322*
Political participation	.153**
Interest in politics	.024
Attitudes toward women's org.	.051
Attitudes toward unpaid labor	.072
Attitudes toward social regulation	.054
Political affiliation	-.040
Modern sexism	-.111
Old-fashioned sexism	.045
R	.552
R Square	.304

\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

An additional forward multiple regression was conducted duplicating the regression presented in Table 7 for only those students who had prior sexual experience. This was done in order to include Self-sex Quality and Partner-sex Quality as independent variables. As Table 8 demonstrates, modern sexism and attitudes toward social regulation are the best predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality,  $R^2 = .180$ ,  $p < .001$ . This model accounts for much less (18%) of the variance in attitudes toward women's premarital

sexuality for participants who had prior sex, when compared to the previous regression. Modern sexist attitudes was the best predictor, with those who evidenced less modern sexism and more favoring attitudes toward social regulation being more permissive in their attitudes toward women's premarital sex.

Table 8. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables Excluding Sexual Attitudes for Participants who had Prior Sexual Experience

	Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality $\beta$
Modern sexism	-.227*
Attitudes toward social regulation	.172**
Political participation	-.054
Interest in politics	.161
Attitudes toward women's org.	-.022
Attitudes toward unpaid labor	-.012
Political affiliation	.000
Personal religiosity	-.127
Political religiosity	-.097
Old-fashion sexism	-.062
Self-sex quality	.033
Partner-sex quality	.018
R	.424
R Square	.180

\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

*Relationships Between Attitudinal And Behavioral Variables, Background Variables, And Attitudes Toward Women's Premarital Sexuality*

To examine the combined effect of attitudinal and behavioral *and* background variables on attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality, and to assess which of the variables in this combined model were the strongest predictors, a forward multiple regression was conducted. Table 9 presents the results of this regression, and shows that sexual attitudes is the only significant predictor,  $R^2 = .390$ ,  $p < .001$ . This model accounts for 39% of the variance in attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality, with those with more liberal sexual attitudes holding more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sex.

Table 9. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables and Background Variables

	Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality
	$\beta$
Sexual attitudes	.624*
Political participation	.080
Interest in politics	.076
Attitudes toward women's org	.068
Attitudes toward unpaid labor	.085
Attitudes toward social regulation	.053
Political affiliation	.103
Personal religiosity	-.116
Political religiosity	.120
Modern sexism	-.085
Old-fashion sexism	.086
Sexual orientation	.083
Age	.106
City of birth	.085
Ethnicity	-.071
Total monthly family income	.077
Number of children	.054
Residential partners	.021
Employment status	-.026
Mother's educational background	.146
Father's educational background	.101
Social class	.032
R	.624
R Square	.390

\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

Due to the overwhelmingly strong effect of sexual attitudes and its significant correlation with most of the attitudinal and behavioral variables and some of the

background variables, the regression in Table 9 was repeated, excluding sexual attitudes from the equation. Table 10 presents the results and shows that personal religiosity and mother's educational background are best predictors,  $R^2 = .262$ ,  $p < .001$ . This model accounted for less (26.2%) of the variance in attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality when compared to the previous regression. Personal religiosity was the strongest predictor, followed by mother's education, with students with lower levels of personal religiosity and those whose mothers were highly educated demonstrating greater permissiveness in their attitudes toward women's premarital sex.



Table 10. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral Variables and Background Variables Excluding Sexual Attitudes

	Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality
	$\beta$
Personal religiosity	-.402*
Mother's educational background	.236*
Political participation	.102
Interest in politics	.052
Attitudes toward women's org	.070
Attitudes toward unpaid labor	.091
Attitudes toward social regulation	-.099
Political affiliation	-.170
Political religiosity	-.151
Modern sexism	.006
Old-fashion sexism	.080
Sexual orientation	.074
Age	.052
City of birth	-.080
Ethnicity	.012
Total monthly family income	.106
Number of children	-.078
Residential partners	-.078
Employment status	-.053
Father's educational background	.089
Social class	.032
R	.512
R Square	.262

\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

An additional forward multiple regression was conducted duplicating the regression presented in Table 10 for only those students who *had* prior sexual experience. This was

done in order to include Self-sex Quality and Partner-sex Quality as independent variables. As Table 11 demonstrates, modern sexism, attitudes toward social regulation, and sexual orientation are the best predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality,  $R^2 = .268$ ,  $p < .001$ . This model accounts for more of variance when compared to the previous regression, but less (26.8%) of variance when compared to the regression presented in Table 9. Sexual orientation was the best predictor, followed by modern sexism and attitudes toward social regulation, with those who were not strictly heterosexual, who evidenced less modern sexism and who had more favoring attitudes toward social regulation being more permissive in their attitudes toward women's premarital sex.

Table 11. Regression of Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality on Attitudinal and Behavioral *and* Background Variables for Respondents *with* Prior Sexual Experience Excluding Sexual Attitudes

	Attitudes toward Women's Premarital Sexuality
	$\beta$
Modern sexism	-.314*
Sexual orientation	.331*
Attitudes toward social regulation	.289**
Political participation	-.003
Interest in politics	.111
Attitudes toward women's org.	-.012
Attitudes toward unpaid labor	.084
Political affiliation	-.072
Personal religiosity	-.097
Political religiosity	-.047
Old-fashion sexism	.014
Age	.074
City of birth	-.018
Ethnicity	.044
Total monthly family income	-.073
Number of children	-.035
Residential partner	-.144
Employment status	-.038
Mother's educational background	-.069
Father's educational background	.014
Social class	.029
Self-sex quality	.038
Partner-sex quality	.106
R	.518
R Square	.268

\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

## **Conclusions And Discussion**

The current research explored how attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality are affected by background and attitudinal and behavioral variables in a sample of Turkish female university students studying in Istanbul University Department of English Language and Literature.

### Background Variables

Regression on the background variables revealed that mother's educational background, age, employment status, and ethnicity correlated with attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality, but not father's educational background<sup>1</sup>, sexual orientation or social class. Accordingly, older, employed, non-Turkish participants whose mothers were better educated tended to have more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. For participants who never had sex before, mother's education and ethnicity seem to be strong predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality while age and employment status lose their importance.

As discussed in the review of the literature, one's attitudes and beliefs are the result of one's socialization (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979). The strong effect of mothers' educational background seems to suggest that the family, more specifically mothers, play an important role in women's sexual socialization (Duggan and Hunter, 1995). On the other hand, previous research focused on the family as a cohesive whole (e.g. Herold and Goldwin, 1981; Langille and Curtis, 2002; Baker et. al., 1988). This study found no

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that mother's and father's education are significantly correlated ( $r = .687$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

significant effect of fathers' education. Hence, the finding indicates that the family should be disaggregated to determine the specificity of the family's effect, especially regarding parental roles of the mother and the father.

One might argue that better educated mothers' reactions to their daughters' sexual acts are different from less educated mothers, and that their language does not lead to inhibiting attitudes in their children as argued by Gagnon and Simon (1973) and Ehrhardt (1994). The higher education of mothers may also lead to a different, more permissive social code and ideology (DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979) that mothers pass onto their children, as well as to an increased ability to provide their children with sufficient, correct, and meaningful information about sex in contrast to Daniluck's (1998) observations of the average American families. It is thus likely that increased education decreases mothers' tendencies not to talk with their children about their sex-related body parts, hence reducing the probability that daughters are uncertain "... about ... the workings of their own bodies ..." (Daniluck, 1998, p. 32). This leads daughters to be more permissive.

The significant effect of mother's education also supports Reiss' (1967) theory, which asserts that family is a key and direct determinant of attitudes toward premarital sexuality. Reiss' theory also suggests that courtship is another key determinant of these attitudes. The current study failed to confirm this: there was no significant effect of sex life quality. It should be mentioned that my literature review did not reveal any specific references to *mother's* educational status as a determinant of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Past research focuses on the family as a whole and indicates that

variables related to the family (such as parental communication, parental monitoring, family conflict, and number of siblings and number of parents) correlate with attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality as well as premarital sexual behavior.

Although ethnicity was a significant predictor of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality in this research, little research was found with regard to ethnicity's effect on attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality in the Turkish literature. Apparently, identifying oneself as Turkish is strongly related to restrictive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. It is possible that those who do not identify themselves as Turkish isolate themselves from the social pressures that inhibit and prohibit women's sexual activities. There are a number of possible explanations for the gap in the literature. One is that the literature on premarital sex is mostly done in the United States. This literature *examines* race (e.g. blacks and whites) but *ignores* ethnicity (e.g. German Americans and Irish Americans). It might be argued that, consciously or unconsciously, the U.S. underplays the importance of ethnicity in order to maintain the majority status of whites as a race to dominate, oppress, and exploit those constructed as minorities (e.g. blacks). Thus, it is unsurprising not to find many references to ethnicity in U.S. dominated sex research. Another explanation is that Turkey has been experiencing a tremendous amount of ethnic conflicts (and a civil war) between the Turkish government and Kurdish people. Hence, the issue of ethnicity in Turkey is highly loaded with political tensions. Combined with the lack of sex research, it is not surprising to find a gap in the Turkish scientific inquiry where the relationship between sex and ethnicity are ignored.

Another background variable that predicted attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality was age. The positive correlation between age and attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality is replicated in a number of previous studies, including DeLamater and MacCorquodale (1979) and Ozan et. al. (2005), while it conflicted with others, such as Lafuente and Valcarel (1984), Sakalli-Ugurlu and Glick (2003), and Muftuler-Bac (1999). The age range in this study was restricted. The sample was relatively younger and most students were between the ages of 18 and 23. Younger students tended to live with their parents or relatives. Hence, it might be argued that, in this age range, as students get older and move out of their family home, they are freed from the restrictive social influence of their families and exposed to more liberal social forces.

Another effect was that of employment. One possible explanation for the positive effect of employment on attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality is related to the shift of control during a woman's sexual development. It is possible that as one is employed and steps away from home, the restrictive effect of the family diminishes, opening the way for more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality for the students in this study.

#### Attitudinal And Behavioral Variables

Among attitudinal and behavioral variables, only sexual attitudes predicted attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Sexually liberal participants in general tended to have more permissive attitudes, specifically toward women's premarital sexuality. However, when the overwhelmingly strong effect of sexual attitudes was excluded from the equation,

personal and political religiosity and political participation emerged as strong predictors. Participants who were high on political participation but low on personal and political religiosity tended to have more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. For those who had prior sexual experience, being low on modern sexism and having negative attitudes toward social regulation positively correlated with supportive attitudes toward premarital sexuality. Sex life quality, on the other hand, had no significant effect.

This research confirmed previous American studies that implied a strong relationship between one's sexual attitudes in general and attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality (Reiss, 1960; DeLamater and MacCorquodale, 1979; Chitanum and Finchilescu, 2003). The finding is nevertheless significant: from a Western perspective, attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality are believed to be a dimension of the more general sexual attitudes. However, in the Turkish context, women's sexuality is defined in terms of marriage. Regardless of one's sexual attitudes, premarital sex for women is considered to be wrong or inappropriate (Pelin, 1999; Wasti and Cortine, 2002; Kayir, 2000; Aydin and Gulcat; Duyan and Duyan, 2005; Altinay, 2000). Hence, positive attitudes toward sexuality in general does not guarantee positive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality.

The effect of both personal and political religiosity were apparent once sexual attitudes was excluded. While personal religiosity depicts how much one is involved in religion, political religiosity explores attitudes toward the relation between the secular Turkish democracy and the penetration of Islamic laws and dogmas into the political realm. The negative effect of religiosity on sexuality is well documented (e.g. Freud, [1928] 1989;



Linfield, 1960; Thomas, 1975; Bell, 1966; Herold and Goodwin, 1981; Jurich, 1984; Ilkcaracan, 2001; Arsel, 1997; Duyan, 2005). In addition religion, specifically Islam, is a crucial social force negatively affecting sexual norms and rules in the Turkish society, especially through its obsession with virginity. In short, participants who were affected more by the Islamic sexual taboos tended to have less permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality.

The effect of political participation instead of political affiliation was a surprising predictor of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Although political affiliation was not a predictor of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality, this may well be because a large number of participants tended to be between middle to left-liberal on the political affiliation continuum (87.2%). Hence, the effect of political participation might indicate that in this relatively politically homogeneous sample, greater involvement in left-wing politics tends to generate more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. This interpretation is consistent with the findings of Lafuente and Valcárcel (1984), McKelvey et. al. (1999), and Sakalli-Ugurlu and Glick (2003), all of whom found a relationship between political views and attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality.

The effects of religiosity and political participation were replaced by modern sexism and attitudes toward social regulation for participants who had prior sexual experience. Modern sexism depicts a set of attitudes that may not be perceived by the general population as sexist, but contains strong but less hostile elements of misogynist beliefs compared to old-fashioned sexism. As mentioned earlier, ambivalent sexism theory claims

that sexist attitudes toward women have a benevolent and a hostile component. Modern sexism is similar to benevolent sexism because it includes less apparent hostile attitudes against women. In contrast, old-fashioned sexism is similar to hostile sexism, in that both contain easily recognizable misogynist attitudes. The current findings seem to confirm Sakalli-Ugurlu and Glick's (2003) finding that benevolent sexism was related to negative premarital attitudes in women contrary to hostile sexism, which did not significantly predict negative premarital attitudes.

Attitudes toward social regulation as a predictor of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality was interesting in that those opposed to social regulation tended to be more permissive toward women's premarital sexuality. Attitudes toward social regulation depicts two concepts: attitudes toward governmental interference with businesses and attitudes toward ethnic and religious organizations. Both of these dimensions refer to left or right-wing attitudes of the participants. Supporting governmental interference and supporting ethnic or religious organizations are intrinsically leftist attitudes. Unfortunately, the question on ethnic and religious organizations was poorly worded in the survey. The poor wording resulted in two different readings of the same question, hence clouding any speculation on the effect of attitudes toward social regulation. Originally, this question was deployed as a means of examining participants' attitudes toward minorities. Supporting minorities such as Kurds (ethnic) or *Alevi*s (religious) is a leftist attitude in the Turkish context. However, upon further review, it was observed that right-wing participants might have expressed positive attitudes toward this, as they would probably support oppressive

ethnic and religious organizations such as a fascist political party or an oppressive Sunni sect.

### Background And Attitudinal And Behavioral Variables

When all the variables are considered, sexual attitudes was the only predictor for attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. As one could easily predict, those with liberal sexual attitudes tended to have permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. When this variable's strong effect was excluded from the equation, personal religiosity and mother's education emerged as the best predictors of the dependent variable. Less religious participants who had better educated mothers tended to be more permissive toward women's premarital sexuality. For participants who had prior sexual experience, modern sexism, political participation, attitudes toward social regulation, and sexual orientation were the best predictors of attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Accordingly, in this group, less sexist non-heterosexual participants who had negative attitudes toward social regulation and who participated more in politics tended to have more permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality.

The emergence of sexual orientation as a predictor in sexually experienced group (when *background and attitudinal* variables were combined) was unexpected. This was relatively hard to interpret, because it did *not* emerge as a predictor among *background* variables for participants who had prior sexual experience. The stability of this variable was questionable in that there were too few participants who reported bisexual or lesbian sexual orientation.

### Limitations Of The Research

This research is restricted by a number of limitations. First, the literature focusing on sexuality in Turkey is extremely scarce and mostly unavailable due to the physical location of the researcher. Because there was a lack of previous sex research in Turkey, this study had to depend for the most part on the U.S. literature. However, the efficacy of such an approach is questionable due to difficulties in interpreting the differences and similarities accross cultures.

Second, in order to keep the survey as short as possible, some important variables were not measured. Such variables included parents' and peers' attitudes towards women's premarital sexuality, nature of sexual education received by the participant (formal to informal), source of sexual education (schools, parents, peers, media, etc.), feminist attitudes, and social desirability. Although data were obtained about parents' educational background, no data was collected regarding parental attitudes. As such, interpretations on mother's education were based on assumptions instead of empirical data. The literature reveals that peers' and parents' attitudes affect attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Without data on the source and the nature of sexual education and peers' and parents' attitudes toward premarital sex, the research cannot obtain a more complete picture of what directly affects one's attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. The source of sexual education would disclose the current state of Turkish formal sex education, which is believed to be nonexistent. Data on participants' feminist attitudes would be complementary to the results obtained through the variables of modern and old-fashioned sexism. Although

these variables measure how participants perceive gender, they do not give insight of how they understand the tensions between genders. Finally, social desirability as a control variable would make it possible to eliminate this important confounding variable.

The use of survey as the only methodology, although mandatory due to the physical location of the researcher, was limiting. Although survey as a methodology has its own strengths, it seems to reflect the patriarchal culture's obsession with numbers, and the imposition of the researcher's own definitions on the participants (Reinharz, 1992). In contrast, interviewing (which has its own problems as well) as a complementary qualitative method to survey would offer comprehensive depth of understanding and flexibility through discussion, clarification, and probing (Babbie, 2004).

A minor problem was that liberalism was not clearly explained in the survey. Although it clearly measured left-wing – right-wing political views (see Table 1), it is likely that some participants were misled, as they possibly confused economical liberalism (*laissez-faire*) with social liberalism (being open-minded).

Finally, the non-random nature of the sample was restrictive: it was generalizable only to “female undergraduate students of Istanbul University Department of Language and Literature”, instead of the general Turkish population. Hence, implications of the research findings are limited, and preliminary and exploratory in nature.

#### Practical And Policy Implications

One of the underlying assumptions of this research was that, the development of sexuality progresses from birth to death and that premarital sexuality is an important part of

this process, even though it might be experienced problematically due to the patriarchal nature of the society. The prohibition of premarital sexuality blocks many of the physical and psychological aspects of sexual development, limiting women's sexual choices on the basis of theoretical and obsolete assumption instead of actual sex-play/practice.

The findings indicate that, in order to ease the taboos related to women's premarital sex in Turkey, more public attention is needed to increase awareness and information on sexuality, especially among those of Turkish ethnic background who seemed to be affected more by sexual taboos. Policies need to be implemented in order to increase overall education levels of mothers, who are significantly less educated than fathers. Women's employment also need to be better promoted, as it seems to decrease the negative effects of families, peers, and school on attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. Religion is an important means of control of premarital sex, and although it is a very sensitive issue in Turkey, its misogynist assumptions need to be uncovered and brought under public scrutiny. On the other hand, heterosexism negatively affected participants' attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality, in that strictly heterosexual participants had less permissive attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality. It seems that heterosexism works hand in hand with other social forces in Turkish society in limiting women's freedom of sexual choices. Although there are some Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) organizations in Turkey, they are marginalized. Apart from their empowering functions among the Turkish LGBT communities, they need to be further supported as a means of fighting the oppressive impact of compulsory heterosexuality on women's sexual lives.

Although old-fashioned sexism seemed to have less effect on attitudes toward women's premarital sexuality in this sample, modern sexist attitudes seem to affect even this relatively liberal left-wing highly educated population. Such sexist attitudes need to be brought under public scrutiny as they have the potential to maim the future feminist struggles in Turkey.

## APPENDICES



## Appendix A – Turkish Survey



Sayın katılımcı,

Adım Mehmet A. Ergun. ABD'deki Towson Üniversitesi Kadın Araştırmaları Bölümü'nde yüksek lisans öğrencisiyim. Tezimin bir parçası olan bu araştırmada Türkiye'deki üniversite öğrencilerinin dini, cinsel ve politik tutumlarını incelemeyi amaçlıyorum. Bu araştırmaya katılım isteğe bağlıdır. Bu araştırmaya katılmaya karar verirseniz, sizden bir anket doldurmanız istenecektir. Bütün soruları cevaplamanız zorunlu değildir. İstedığınız zaman soruları cevaplamayı bırakabilirsiniz. Araştırmaya katılma kararınızın dersteki durumunuza herhangi bir etkisi yoktur. Öğretmeniniz bu anketin dersinde dağıtılmasına izin vermiştir. Öğretmeniniz araştırmaya katılıp katılmadığınızı bilmeyecektir. Eğer araştırmaya katılıyorsanız cevaplarınızı öğrenemeyecektir.

Kadın Araştırmaları

Towson Üniversitesi  
8000 York Road  
Towson, MD 21252

t. 410 704-2660  
f. 410 704-3753

Eğer bu araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz kimliğiniz gizli kalacaktır. Ben ya da sonuçları okuyan başka hiç kimse kimliğinizi belirleyemeyecektir. Lütfen ankete isminizi yazmayınız ve kimliğinizi belirtebilecek başka işaretler bırakmayınız.

Bu araştırmayla ilgili herhangi bir sorunuz varsa, aşağıdaki telefon numaralarından ilgili kişilere ulaşabilirsiniz:

- Mehmet A. Ergun: +99 (410) 663-8399
- Dr. Karen Dugger, Araştırma danışmanı: +99 (410) 704-5456
- Dr. Patricia Alt, Towson Üniversitesi Araştırma Katılımcıları İnceleme Kurulu Başkanı: +99 (410) 704-2236

Katılımcılar, araştırma sonunda anket toplu sonuçlarının bir kopyasını İstanbul Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü'nde bulabilirler.

Değerli zamanınız için çok teşekkürler,

Saygılarımla,

Mehmet A. Ergun  
Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi

### Genel Yönergeler

Bu anket tümüyle anonimdir. İsmınızı hiçbir yere yazmamalısınız. Belirli kişilerle değil, genel kalıplarla ilgileniyoruz. Kimliğinizi bulmamızın hiçbir yolu yok. Lütfen olabildigince dürüst olunuz çünkü bu anketin geçerli olması bizim için çok önemli. Dürüstlüğünüzle bize önemli bir yardımda bulunmuş olacaksınız.

Sorularla ilgili düşünce ve görüşlerinizi her sayfanın sonunda bulunan satırlara yazabilirsiniz. İşbirliğiniz için teşekkürler.

### 1. BÖLÜM (1. – 15. sorular)

#### 1. Cinsiyetiniz:

- ☐ Kadın  
☐ Erkek

#### 2. Yaşınız: \_\_\_\_\_ yıl

#### 3. Medenî durumunuz:

- ☐ Hiç evlenmedi  
☐ Evli  
☐ Boşanmış  
☐ Ayrı  
☐ Diğer; lütfen belirtiniz \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Türkiye’de mi doğdunuz?

- ☐ Evet  
☐ Hayır, Hangi ülkede doğdunuz? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. Doğduğunuz şehir: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 6. Etnik köken: (uygun bulduklarınızı işaretleyiniz)

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arap                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Kurt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Azeri                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Laz  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgar                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Türk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ermeni                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Rum  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diğer; lütfen belirtiniz: _____ |                               |

#### 7. Ailenizin toplam aylık geliri: (yaklaşık) \_\_\_\_\_ YTL

#### 8. Çocuğunuz var mı?

- ☐ Hayır  
☐ Evet, Kaç tane? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 9. Kiminle yaşıyorsunuz?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eşim ve çocuklarımla            | <input type="checkbox"/> Ev arkadaşıyla   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sadece eşimle                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Arkadaş(lar)ımla |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sadece çocuklarımla             | <input type="checkbox"/> Yalnız           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diğer; lütfen belirtiniz: _____ |   |

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

---

10. Ücret karşılığı bir işte çalışıyor musunuz?

- ☐ Evet  
☐ Hayır

11. Anne-babanızın medeni durumu:

- ☐ Hiç evlenmedi ☐ Evli  
☐ Boşandı ☐ Ayrı  
☐ Diğer

12. Annenizin eğitim durumu:

- ☐ İlkokul mezunu ☐ Üniversite mezunu  
☐ Ortaokul mezunu ☐ Yüksek lisans mezunu  
☐ Lise mezunu ☐ Diğer  
☐ Yüksekokul mezunu

13. Babanızın eğitim durumu:

- ☐ İlkokul mezunu ☐ Üniversite mezunu  
☐ Ortaokul mezunu ☐ Yüksek lisans mezunu  
☐ Lise mezunu ☐ Diğer  
☐ Yüksekokul mezunu

14. Toplumsal sınıfınızı tanımlamak için aşağıdaki seçeneklerden hangisini seçerdiniz?

- ☐ Alt sınıf ☐ Üst sınıf  
☐ Çalışan sınıf ☐ Herhangi bir toplumsal sınıfa dahil değilim  
☐ Orta sınıf ☐ Bilmiyorum  
☐ Diğer; lütfen belirtiniz: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Toplumsal ve ekonomik ölçütlere göre toplumumuzun sınıflara ayrıldığını, ve bu sınıfların toplumumuzun hiyerarşik katmanlarını oluşturduğunu varsayarsak, aşağıdaki ölçekte kendinizi nereye yerleştirirdiniz? (Lütfen cevabınıza uygun düşen rakamı yuvarlak içine alınız)

En alt sınıf				Orta sınıf				En üst sınıf
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

---

**2. BÖLÜM (16. – 20. sorular)**

16. Geçtiğimiz üç ya da dört yılda herhangi bir politik mitinge ya da gösteriye katıldınız mı?

☐ Evet

☐ Hayır

17. Geçtiğimiz üç ya da dört yılda herhangi bir politik parti ya da topluluğa para bağışında bulundunuz mu?

☐ Evet

☐ Hayır

18. Aşağıda verilen her ifade için, lütfen kişisel tutumunuzu en iyi yansıtan kutuyu işaretleyiniz.

İfadeler	Tutumunuz				
	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Tarafsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
a. Ulusal politikayla ilgileniyorum					
b. Uluslararası politikayla ilgileniyorum					
c. Etnik köken ya da dine dayalı kuruluşlar ayrımcılığı yüceltiyor ve hep birlikte yaşamamızı zorlaştırıyor.					
d. Bu ülkede sendikalar çok güçlü olmak zorundalar					
e. Devletin işyerleri üzerinde kontrolü bulunmamalı					

19. Politik görüşler konusunda insanlar “sağ” ve “sol”dan bahsederler. Lütfen kendi politik görüşlerinizi aşağıdaki ölçeği kullanarak belirtmeye çalışınız. (Lütfen cevabınıza uygun düşen rakamı yuvarlak içine alınız)

Sol				Orta			Sağ
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

20. Politik görüşler konusunda insanlar “muhafazakar” ve “liberal” olmaktan bahsederler. Lütfen kendi politik görüşlerinizi aşağıdaki ölçeği kullanarak belirtmeye çalışınız. (Lütfen cevabınıza uygun düşen rakamı yuvarlak içine alınız)

Muhafazakar				Orta			Liberal
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

---

**3. BÖLÜM (21. – 23. sorular)****21. Hangi dine mensupsunuz?**

- ☐ Alevi  
☐ Ateist  
☐ Budist  
☐ Hindu  
☐ Katolik
- ☐ Musevi  
☐ Ortodoks  
☐ Protestan  
☐ Sünni  
☐ Diğer

**22. Aşağıda dini inançlarla ilgili çeşitli ifadeler bulacaksınız. Her ifade için, lütfen kişisel tutumunuzu en iyi belirten kutuyu işaretleyiniz.**

İfadeler	Tutumunuz				
	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Tarafsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum
a. Allah'a inanıyorum					
b. Şeytan'a inanıyorum					
c. Cehennem'e inanıyorum					
d. Cennet'e inanıyorum					
e. Ölümden sonra yaşam olduğuna inanıyorum					
f. Dini mucizelere inanıyorum					
g. Allah'a olan inancım benim için çok önemli					
h. Dua etmek hayatımın olağan bir parçası					
i. Dinim davranışlarımı etkiler					

**23. Aşağıdaki her ifade için, tutumunuzu en iyi belirten kutuyu işaretleyiniz. Lütfen kimliğinizin gizli olduğunu unutmayınız. Ayrıca neye hoşgörünüz olduğuyla değil, kişisel görüşlerinizle ilgileniyoruz.**

İfadeler	Tutumunuz				
	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Tarafsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum
a. Türban, üniversite ve TBMM gibi bütün kamusal alanlarda serbest bırakılmalı					
b. Bütün kamusal alanlarda mescit bulunmalı					
c. Cuma namazı sırasında işyerleri kapatılmalı					
d. İslami kurallara, anayasadan daha fazla önem verilmeli					
e. Laiklik sivil hakları kısıtlıyor					

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

**4. BÖLÜM (24. soru)**

24. Aşağıda kadınlarla ilgili kimi ifadeler bulacaksınız. Her ifade için, lütfen kişisel tutumunuzu en iyi belirten kutuyu işaretleyiniz. Bu bir test değildir. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap bulunmamaktadır. Lütfen kimliğinizin gizli olduğunu unutmayınız. Ayrıca neye hoşgörünüz olduğuyla değil, kişisel görüşlerinizle ilgileniyoruz.

İfadeler	Tutumunuz				
	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Tarafsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum
a. Türkiye’de kadınlara karşı ayrımcılık artık bir problem değil					
b. Kadınlar çoğu zaman iyi iş tekliflerini cinsel ayrımcılık yüzünden kaçırırlar					
c. Televizyonda kadınlara karşı seksist davranışlara nadiren rastlanıyor					
d. Genelde toplumumuzda insanlar kadınlara ve kocalarına eşit davranırlar					
e. Kadınlar ve erkekler başarı için eşit fırsata sahipler					
f. Türkiye’deki kadın kuruluşlarının neden kızgın olduğu kolayca anlaşılıyor					
g. Kadın kuruluşlarının neden hala kadınlarla erkeklerin eşitsizliği konusuyla uğraştıkları kolayca anlaşılıyor					
h. Geçtiğimiz birkaç yıldır devlet ve medya, kadınların sorunlarına çok fazla zaman ayırdı					

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

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**5. BÖLÜM (25. soru)**

25. Aşağıda erkek ve kadınlarla ilgili kimi ifadeler bulacaksınız. Her ifade için, lütfen kişisel tutumunuzu en iyi belirten kutuyu işaretleyiniz. Bu bir test değildir. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap bulunmamaktadır. Lütfen kimliğinizin gizli olduğunu unutmayınız. Ayrıca neye hoşgörünüz olduğuyla değil, kişisel görüşlerinizle ilgileniyoruz.

İfadeler	Tutumunuz				
	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Tarafsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum
a. Kadınlar genelde erkekler kadar akıllı olmuyorlar					
b. Kadınlar da erkekler kadar iyi yönetici olurlar					
c. Oğlanları sporla uğraşmaya cesaretlendirmek, kızları sporla uğraşmaya cesaretlendirmekten daha önemlidir					
d. Kadınlar da erkekler kadar iyi mantık yürütebilirler					
e. Ailenin her iki ferdi de çalışıyorsa ve çocukları okulda hastalanırsa, okul baba yerine anneyi aramalıdır					

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

---

**6. BÖLÜM** (26. – 36. sorular)**Tanımlar**

**Cinsel deneyim:** Her iki tarafın da rızasıyla gerçekleşen ve sizin 'cinsel' olduğunu düşündüğünüz herhangi bir deneyim (örnek: dokunmak, öpmek, okşamak, oral seks, cinsel birleşme vs.)

26. Şu anda, ya da geçtiğimiz son üç veya dört yılda herhangi birisiyle cinsel deneyiminiz oldu mu?

☐ Evet

☐ Hayır: lütfen 37. soruya geçiniz

**27. – 36. sorular için yönergeler**

Aşağıda cinsel yaşantınıza ilişkin kimi ifadeler bulacaksınız. Her ifade için, lütfen kişisel tutumunuzu en iyi belirten kutuyu işaretleyiniz. Bu bir test değildir. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap bulunmamaktadır. Lütfen kimliğinizin gizli olduğunu unutmayınız. Ayrıca neye hoşgörünüz olduğuyla değil, kişisel görüşlerinizle ilgileniyoruz.

İfadeler	Tutumunuz				
	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Tarafsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum
27. Partnerimin cinsel hayatımdan zevk aldığını hissediyorum					
28. Cinsel hayatım çok heyecan verici					
29. Cinsellik partnerim için de benim için de eğlenceli					
30. Cinsel hayatımın nitelikten yoksun olduğunu hissediyorum					
31. Partnerim cinsel açıdan çok heyecan verici					
32. Partnerimin sevdiği ya da kullandığı cinsel tekniklerden zevk alıyorum					
33. Partnerim beni cinsel açıdan kolayca heyecanlandırıyor					
34. Partnerimin cinsel açıdan benden hoşnut olduğunu hissediyorum					
35. Partnerim cinsel gereksinim ve isteklerime duyarlı					
36. Cinsel hayatım sıkıcı					

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

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## 7. BÖLÜM (37. – 38. sorular)

### Tanımlar

**Cinsel deneyim:** Her iki tarafın da rızasıyla gerçekleşen ve sizin 'cinsel' olduğunu düşündüğünüz herhangi bir deneyim (örnek: dokunmak, öpmek, okşamak, oral seks, cinsel birleşme vs.)

37. İnsanlar kadın ve erkekleri cinsel açıdan çeşitli derecelerde çekici bulabilirler. Siz en çok hangi cinsiyeti cinsel açıdan çekici buluyorsunuz? Lütfen cevabınızı aşağıdaki ölçekte belirtiniz.

Yalnızca erkekleri				Her iki cinsiyeti			Yalnızca kadınları
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

38. Aşağıda bir cinsel deneyim listesi bulacaksınız. Tabloyu kullanarak, listedeki her bir deneyimi evlilik öncesinde ve evlendikten sonra yaşayıp yaşamadığınızı, uygun cevabı yuvarlak içine alarak işaretleyiniz. Lütfen kimliğinizin gizli olduğunu unutmayınız.

Deneyim	Evlilik öncesi		Evlilik sonrası (hiç evlenmediyseniz lütfen boş bırakınız)	
a. Birini dil temasıyla öpmek	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
b. Bir kadının cinsel organına dokunmak	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
c. Bir erkeğin cinsel organına dokunmak	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
d. Bir kadına oral seks yapmak	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
e. Bir erkeğe oral seks yapmak	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
f. Bir erkeğin sizin cinsel organınıza dokunması	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
g. Bir kadının sizin cinsel organınıza dokunması	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
h. Bir erkeğin size oral seks yapması	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
i. Bir kadının size oral seks yapması	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
j. Kadın-Erkek arası cinsel birleşme	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
k. Kadın-Kadın arası cinsel birleşme	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
l. Erkek-Erkek arası cinsel birleşme	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım
m. Birden fazla partnerle aynı anda cinsel birleşme	Yaşadım	Hiç yaşamadım	Yaşadım	Yaşamadım

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

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**8. BÖLÜM** (39. – 49. sorular)**Yönergeler:**

Anketin bu bölümü insanların cinsel davranışlara yönelik tutumlarını ölçmek üzere hazırlanmıştır. Bir test değildir. Doğru ve yanlış cevap bulunmamaktadır. Lütfen her ifadeye olabildiğince dikkatle ve doğru cevap veriniz. Görüşünüzü en iyi yansıtan kutuyu "X" koyarak işaretleyiniz.

İfadeler	Tutumunuz				
	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Tarafsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum
39. Bu günlerde yetişkinlere çok fazla cinsel özgürlük verildiğini düşünüyorum					
40. Son yıllarda artan cinsel özgürlüğün Türk aile yapısını yıprattığını düşünüyorum					
41. Gençlere cinsellikle ilgili gereğinden fazla bilgi verildiğini düşünüyorum					
42. Evlilik öncesi cinsellik çürüten toplumsal yapının bir göstergesidir					
43. Evlilik dışı cinsel ilişki kabul edilemez					
44. İnsanların cinselliğe kendilerini fazla kaptırdıklarını düşünüyorum					
45. İnsanların cinselliklerini evliliğe kadar saklamaları gerektiğini düşünüyorum					
46. Eşcinsellere çok fazla toplumsal onay verildiğini düşünüyorum					
47. Cinsellik yalnızca üreme amaçlı olmalı					
48. İnsanlar mastürbasyon yapmamalı					
49. İki yetişkinin kendi rızalarıyla yaptıkları başkalarını ilgilendirmez					

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

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**9. BÖLÜM** (50. – 55. sorular)

**Yönergeler:**

Anketin bu bölümü insanların evlilik öncesi cinsel davranışlara yönelik tutumlarını ölçmek üzere hazırlanmıştır. Bir test değildir. Doğru ve yanlış cevap bulunmamaktadır. Lütfen her ifadeye olabildiğince dikkatle ve doğru cevap veriniz. Görüşünüzü en iyi yansıtan kutuyu "X" koyarak işaretleyiniz.

Lütfen her soru için, AYNİ FİKİRDE OLDUĞUNUZ BÜTÜN İFADELERİ (bir ya da birden fazla) işaretleyiniz.

50. Bence bir **kadının** partneriyle öpüşmesi, eğer
- ☐ Kadın partneriyle *evliyse* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Kadın evlenmek üzere partneriyle *nişanlıysa* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Kadın partnerine *aşık* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Kadın partnerine karşı *bir şey hissetmiyorsa* kabul edilebilir.
51. Bence bir **kadının** elbiseleri olmadan partneriyle "oynaşması", eğer
- ☐ Kadın partneriyle *evliyse* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Kadın evlenmek üzere partneriyle *nişanlıysa* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Kadın partnerine *aşık* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Kadın partnerine karşı *bir şey hissetmiyorsa* kabul edilebilir.
52. Bence bir **kadının** partneriyle "sonuna kadar gitmesi", eğer
- ☐ Kadın partneriyle *evliyse* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Kadın evlenmek üzere partneriyle *nişanlıysa* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Kadın partnerine *aşık* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Kadın partnerine karşı *bir şey hissetmiyorsa* kabul edilebilir.
53. Bence bir **erkeğin** partneriyle öpüşmesi, eğer
- ☐ Erkek partneriyle *evliyse* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Erkek evlenmek üzere partneriyle *nişanlıysa* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Erkek partnerine *aşık* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Erkek partnerine karşı *bir şey hissetmiyorsa* kabul edilebilir.
54. Bence bir **erkeğin** elbiseleri olmadan partneriyle "oynaşması", eğer
- ☐ Erkek partneriyle *evliyse* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Erkek evlenmek üzere partneriyle *nişanlıysa* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Erkek partnerine *aşık* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Erkek partnerine karşı *bir şey hissetmiyorsa* kabul edilebilir.
55. Bence bir **erkeğin** partneriyle "sonuna kadar gitmesi", eğer
- ☐ Erkek partneriyle *evliyse* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Erkek evlenmek üzere partneriyle *nişanlıysa* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Erkek partnerine *aşık* kabul edilebilir.
  - ☐ Erkek partnerine karşı *bir şey hissetmiyorsa* kabul edilebilir.

Düşünce ve görüşleriniz:

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## Appendix B – English Survey



Dear Participant,

My name is Mehmet A. Ergun. I am a graduate student in the Department of Women's Studies at Towson University in the U.S. As part of the research for my master's thesis, I am conducting a survey to explore the religious, sexual, and political attitudes of university students in Turkey. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to participate in my project, you will be asked to complete a survey. It is not necessary to answer every question. You may discontinue your participation in the project at any time. Your decision whether or not to participate in the project will in no way affect your class standing. Your professor has given me permission to conduct my study in your class. She will not know whether or not you have participated, or, if you did, how you responded.

Women's Studies

Towson University  
8000 York Road  
Towson, MD 21252

t. 410 704-2660  
f. 410 704-3753

If you choose to participate in the study, your participation will be completely anonymous. No one reading the results nor I will be able to identify you. Please do not put your name or any other identifying marks on the survey form.

If you have any questions about the project, you may contact me at +99 (410) 663-8399, my faculty advisor, Dr. Karen Dugger at +99 (410) 704-5456, or the Chairperson of Towson University's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants, Dr. Patricia M. Alt, at +99 (410) 704-2236. A copy of the results of the survey, reported in aggregate form, will be available to you upon completion of my project, if you would like to see it. Copies will be forwarded to the Department of English Literature, Istanbul University.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Mehmet A. Ergun  
Graduate Student

General Instructions

This questionnaire is fully anonymous. You should not put your name on it. We are interested in overall patterns and not in any particular individual. There is no way to identify you with your answers. Please be as truthful as you can because it is important that we have a valid test of this questionnaire. You can be of great help to us if you can fill out this questionnaire in full honesty.

Please feel free to write any remarks you may have about the questions on the lines provided at the end of each page. Thank you for your cooperation.

PART 1 (Questions 1 – 15)

1. Your gender:

- ☐ Female  
☐ Male

2. Your age: \_\_\_\_\_ years

3. Marital status:

- ☐ Never married  
☐ Married  
☐ Divorced  
☐ Separated  
☐ Other; please specify \_\_\_\_\_

4. Were you born in Turkey?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ If no, in what country were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

5. City of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Ethnicity: (check all that apply)

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Kurdish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Azeri                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Laz     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgarian                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Rum     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other; please specify: _____ |                                  |

7. Your parents' total monthly income: \_\_\_\_\_ YTL

8. Do you have children?

- ☐ No  
☐ If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

9. With whom do you live?

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse and children          | <input type="checkbox"/> Roommate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse only                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children only                | <input type="checkbox"/> Alone    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other; please specify: _____ |                                   |

Your remarks:

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10. Are you employed?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

11. Marital status of your parents:

- ☐ Never married  
☐ Divorced  
☐ Other  
☐ Married  
☐ Separated

12. The educational background of your mother:

- ☐ Primary School  
☐ Middle School  
☐ High School  
☐ Community College  
☐ University  
☐ Graduate  
☐ Other

13. The educational background of your father:

- ☐ Primary School  
☐ Middle School  
☐ High School  
☐ Community College  
☐ University  
☐ Graduate  
☐ Other

14. If you were asked to use one of the following four names for your social class, which would you say you belong in?

- ☐ Lower  
☐ Working  
☐ Middle  
☐ Other; please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Upper  
☐ No class  
☐ Don't know

15. In our society, it seems there are groups that tend to be towards the top and groups that tend to be towards the bottom, in terms of social and economic status. Here we have a scale that runs from top to bottom. Where would you put yourself on this scale? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

Bottom				Middle				Top
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

Your remarks:





**PART 3 (Questions 21 – 23)****21. What is your religious denomination?**

- |                                  |                                    |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alevi   | <input type="checkbox"/> Musevi    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ateist  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ortodoks  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budist  | <input type="checkbox"/> Protestan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunni     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Katolik | <input type="checkbox"/> Diger     |

**22. Below you will find some statements about your beliefs. For each statement identified below, check the box to the right that best fits your stance regarding the statement.**

Statements	Rating				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. I believe in God					
b. I believe in Devil					
c. I believe in Hell					
d. I believe in Heaven					
e. I believe in life after death					
f. I believe in religious miracles					
g. My faith in God is very important for me					
h. Prayer is a regular part of my life					
i. Religion influences the way I choose to act					

**23. For each statement identified below, check the box to the right that best fits your feelings towards the statement. Please remember, this is an anonymous survey. Also, we are not interested in what you tolerate. We are interested only in your personal beliefs.**

Statements	Rating				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Veil must be allowed in public places such as universities and the parliament					
b. Public places must have a place reserved for prayers					
c. Businesses must be closed during Friday prayers					
d. More importance must be given to Islamic rules rather than constitutional amendments					
e. Secularism limits civil rights and liberties					

Your remarks:

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**PART 4 (Question 24)**

24. Below you will find some statements about women. For each statement identified below, check the box to the right that best fits your feelings towards the statement. It is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Please remember, this is an anonymous survey. Also, we are not interested in what you tolerate. We are interested only in your personal beliefs.

Statements	Rating				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Discrimination against women is no longer a problem in Turkey					
b. Women often miss out on good jobs due to sexual discrimination					
c. It is rare to see women treated in a sexist manner on television					
d. On average, people in our society treat husbands and wives equally					
e. Women and men have equal opportunities for achievement					
f. It is easy to understand the anger of women's groups in Turkey					
g. It is easy to understand why women's groups are still concerned about women's inequality with men					
h. Over the past few years, the government and news media have been spending too much time on women's issues					

Your remarks:

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**PART 5 (Question 25)**

25. Below you will find some statements about men and women. For each statement identified below, check the box to the right that best fits your feelings towards the statement. It is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Please remember, this is an anonymous survey. Also, we are not interested in what you tolerate. We are interested only in your personal beliefs.

Statements	Rating				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Women are generally not as smart as men					
b. Women are as good bosses as men are					
c. It is more important to encourage boys than to encourage girls to participate in athletics					
d. Women are just as capable of thinking logically as men					
e. When both parents are employed and their child gets sick at school, the school should call the mother rather than the father					

Your remarks:

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**PART 6 (Questions 26 - 36)****Definitions**

**Sexual experience:** Any consensual experience that you think is sexual, such as touching or kissing, petting, intercourse etc.

**26. Are you, or were you in the last three or four years involved with someone with whom you had sexual experience?**

☐ Yes

☐ If no, please continue with 38<sup>th</sup> question

**Instructions for Questions 28 through 37**

Below you will find some statements about your satisfaction with your sexual life. For each statement identified below, check the box to the right that best fits your feelings towards the statement. It is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Please remember, this is an anonymous survey. Also, we are not interested in what you tolerate. We are interested only in your personal beliefs.

Statements	Rating				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
27. I feel that my partner enjoys our sex life					
28. My sex life is very exciting					
29. Sex is fun for my partner and me					
30. I feel that my sex life is lacking in quality					
31. My partner is sexually very exciting					
32. I enjoy the sex techniques that my partner likes or uses					
33. It is easy for me to get sexually excited by my partner					
34. I feel that my partner is sexually pleased with me					
35. My partner is very sensitive to my sexual needs and desires					
36. I feel that my sex life is boring					

Your remarks:

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**PART 7 (Questions 37 - 38)****Definitions**

**Sexual experience:** Any consensual experience that you think is sexual, such as touching, kissing etc.

**37. People may be sexually attracted to men and women in various degrees. To which gender do you think you are sexually attracted most? Please place your answer on the scale below.**

Attracted to men only	Both sexes				Attracted to women only	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**38. You will find some sexual experiences below. Using the table below, please circle the response to indicate whether you experienced the item before and after marriage. Please remember, this is an anonymous survey.**

Item	Before Marriage		After Marriage (do not check if you are not married)	
	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
a. Kissing someone with tongue contact	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
b. Touching a female's genitalia	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
c. Touching a male's genitalia	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
d. Oral contact with a female's genitalia	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
e. Oral contact with a male's genitalia	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
f. Another male touching your genitalia	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
g. Another female touching your genitalia	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
h. Oral contact with your genitalia by a male	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
i. Oral contact with your genitalia by a female	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
j. Female-Male sexual intercourse	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
k. Female-Female sexual intercourse	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
l. Male-Male sexual intercourse	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced
m. Group sex	Experienced	Never experienced	Experienced	Not experienced

Your remarks:

**PART 8 (Questions 39 - 49)****Instructions:**

**This part of the survey is designed to measure the way people feel about sexual behavior. It is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. There are a number of statements. Please answer each item as carefully and accurately as you can. Check the box that best reflects your opinion.**

Statements	Rating				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39. I think there is too much sexual freedom given to adults these days					
40. I think the increased sexual freedom seen in the past several years has done much to undermine the Turkish family					
41. I think that young people have been given too much information about sex					
42. Premarital sex is a sign of decaying social order					
43. Extramarital sex is never acceptable					
44. I think people indulge in sex too much					
45. I think sex should be reserved for marriage					
46. Too much social approval has been given to homosexuals					
47. Sex should be about procreation only					
48. People should not masturbate					
49. What two consenting people do together is their own business					

Your remarks:

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**PART 9 (Questions 50 - 55)****Instructions:**

This part of the survey is designed to measure the way people feel about premarital sexual behavior. It is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. There are a number of statements. Please answer each item as carefully and accurately as you can by checking the statements that you agree with.

Please check **ALL** the statements that **YOU AGREE** with, for each question.

50. I agree that kissing is acceptable for a **woman**, if

- ☐ The woman is married to her partner
- ☐ The woman is engaged to be married to her partner
- ☐ The woman is in love with her partner
- ☐ The woman does not feel any affection to her partner

51. I agree that cuddling without clothes is acceptable for a **woman**, if

- ☐ The woman is married to her partner
- ☐ The woman is engaged to be married to her partner
- ☐ The woman is in love with her partner
- ☐ The woman does not feel any affection to her partner

52. I agree that "going all the way" is acceptable for a **woman**, if

- ☐ The woman is married to her partner
- ☐ The woman is engaged to be married to her partner
- ☐ The woman is in love with her partner
- ☐ The woman does not feel any affection to her partner

53. I agree that kissing is acceptable for a **man**, if

- ☐ The man is married to his partner
- ☐ The man is engaged to be married to his partner
- ☐ The man is in love with his partner
- ☐ The man does not feel any affection to his partner

54. I agree that cuddling without clothes is acceptable for a **man**, if

- ☐ The man is married to his partner
- ☐ The man is engaged to be married to his partner
- ☐ The man is in love with his partner
- ☐ The man does not feel any affection to his partner

55. I agree that "going all the way" is acceptable for a **man**, if

- ☐ The man is married to his partner
- ☐ The man is engaged to be married to his partner
- ☐ The man is in love with his partner
- ☐ The man does not feel any affection to his partner

Your remarks:

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## Appendix C – İ.Ü. Department Letter

T.C.  
İSTANBUL ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
EDEBİYAT FAKÜLTESİ  
BATI DİLLERİ ve EDEBİYATLARI BÖLÜMÜ

İNGİLİZ DİLİ ve EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI

22 May, 2005

To Whom It May Concern,

Mehmet Atif Ergun's questionnaire was submitted to the students of our Department on 7-11 May 2005. The students consist of a group of approximately 450 individuals of both sexes, about 75% of whom are female. The majority of our students originate from outside Istanbul.

Due to concern about Question 38, which was too sexually explicit for the susceptibilities of Turkish society, this question was deleted from the questionnaire. Nevertheless, it is necessary to point out that our students are much more broadminded and open about sexuality than their peers in most other departments.

The study was conducted in a classroom situation, during four different sessions. The students were not prevented from conferring with one another. This was necessary for the retrieval of the completed questionnaires.

If you have any other queries about the subject, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Zeynep Ergun  
Head,  
Department of English Language and Literature  
Istanbul University,  
Faculty of Letters  
Beyazit, Istanbul  
Turkey

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**EXPERIENCE****Towson University****April 2004-May 2006***Part-time Insurance Coordinator*

- Enabled coordination between the University and the insurance company
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- Enforced University policies as they applied to international students and school insurance

**EDUCATION****Towson University****September 2003- Present**

- M.S., Women's Studies, Current GPA: 4.00/4.00.

**Bogazici University, Istanbul****October 1997-July 2002**

- B.A., Psychology, GPA: 3.00/4.00.

**Saint Benoit French High School, Istanbul****September 1989-June 1997****VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

- Did literature review for a study on the psychological effects of the 99 earthquake in Turkey; 2002 (*about 3 months*).
- Translated research articles written in French for a professor at Istanbul University; 2001 (*about 3 months*).
- Mentored children from poor families; 2000 (*about 10 months*).

**AWARDS**

- Towson University Graduate Students Association Award

**PUBLICATIONS**

- Periler Cemberi [The Circle of Fairies], Summer 2000, *Evire Cevire*, Bogazici University Translation Club, Istanbul, 37 – 39 (translation from French into Turkish).

**PROFESSIONAL SKILLS**

- Turkish – Mother Tongue; English – Fluent in writing, reading, and speaking; French – Fluent in writing and reading.
- Highly experienced user of Windows 95, 98, XP.
- Experienced user of Linux (Ubuntu, Suse, Slackware, Knoppix, Novell)
- MS Office: Word (excellent), Excel (excellent), Access (very good), PowerPoint (very good).
- OpenOffice.org Write (excellent), Calc (Excellent), Impress (very good).
- Adobe Premiere Video Editing Software (excellent), PhotoStudio Image Editing Software (excellent), GIMP Image Editing Software (good).